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AUTHOR Bliss, Barbara A.
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ABSTRACT

Described are practices of 70 home-schooling families who resided in southwestern lower Michigan in Fall, 1987. A literature review discusses: (1) philosophical roots of the home education movement; (2) concern for the socialization of home-educated children; (3) reasons why home-schooling is considered a good educational alternative; (4) state regulations and qualifications of home educators; and (5) professional resources for home educators. Data were obtained from responses to a questionnaire sent to 200 home-schooling families. Findings are reported in eight sections concerning: (1) family characteristics, including size, number of hours parents work outside the home, and extent of past and future plans for home education; (2) details of parents' education; (3) curriculum and instructional practices; (4) parents' confidence level about their performance of four teaching tasks; (5) the social interaction of parents and children with others; (6) parents' reasons for deciding to educate their children at home; (7) parents' opinions of practical aspects and problems of home-schooling; and (8) parents' additional comments. Related materials, such as the survey instrument and responses to survey questions, are appended. (RH)

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HOME EDUCATION : A LOOK AT CURRENT PRACTICES

by

Barbara A. Bliss

An Action Research Project

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for

TE 871 : Instructional Development

Dr. Joanne Simmons

Dr. Joanne M Simmons
approved

College of Education

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

February 20, 1989

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DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to Gary, Anne, and Jeffrey. Gary, my husband, has consistently provided the strong foundation and distinctive direction of our marriage. Anne and Jeffrey, our children, give me daily motivation to responsibly supervise their education.

I acknowledge my gratefulness to God for the purpose, strength, and endurance necessary for this endeavor.

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ABSTRACT

In the 1980s, growing numbers of families across America are choosing the educational alternative of home schooling. Much discussion is based on opinion rather than hard evidence. This paper describes the actual practices of 70 home schooling families located in southwestern lower Michigan during the fall of 1987.

Literature related to home education is increasing both in source and scope. Current pertinent literature is reviewed regarding answers to the most frequently asked questions.

Data for this report came from a survey sent to 200 home schooling families in November 1987. Seventy families (35%) responded. The analyzed results give a composite picture of current practices.

The survey begins with a family description including size, number of hours parents work outside the home, and extent of past and future plans for home education. In the second section parents give details of their own education. The third section elaborates on curriculum and instructional practices. Parents describe the important features they look for when choosing a curriculum. They rate their usage of instructional materials. They give specific information about their schedule, setting, teaching methods, and other helpful materials. The fourth section of the survey asks parents to rate their level of confidence

in performing four teaching tasks. The fifth section depicts the social interaction of both parents and children with others. The sixth section asks parents to give their specific reasons for making this educational choice. The seventh section asks parents for their opinion of practical considerations such as: advantages, disadvantages, recurring problems, alternative plans, and things that would help them do a better job in the future. The seventh and concluding section is open ended, asking parents for any additional comments.

After reading this report the reader will have a clearer idea of current practices, parameters and issues surrounding this educational alternative - home education.

INTRODUCTION

The idea of parents teaching their children at home is not a new one. John Whitehead, specialist in constitutional law and founder of the Rutherford Institute, gives the following historical overview.

> From the founding of the original colonies of Puritan New England until the early years following the adoption of the Constitution, home education was one of the major forms, if not the predominant form, of education.
>
> Indeed, many of the framers of the American founding documents received all or a substantial part of their education in the home. This includes George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Patrick Henry, James Madison, and Benjamin Franklin. (1985, p. 73)

Home education is an alternative to the more commonly recognized options of either public or private education. Recently in the United States, increasing numbers of families are choosing the alternative of home education. This decision often conflicts with existing state compulsory education laws and regulations. No one knows how many families are currently home educating, or how many more may choose to do so in the future.

In trying to understand the cause and effect of this growing movement, many questions come to mind. What motivates parents to choose this alternative? What advantages does a home setting offer? What are the disadvantages? How do the educational results compare to those of other educational alternatives? What are the long range implications for educators employed by public and private schools?

While many questions are posed, authoritative answers are few. As with any new idea, everyone is interested in authoritative answers. The professional educators, occupied in research dealing with educational practices related to mass education, are not choosing to do extensive research in a field that threatens their livelihood. Home educators are not choosing to spend their time conducting research related to home education. Thus the questions multiply and the authoritative answers remain few.

Before any movement can be analyzed, it must first be described - thus the importance of this study. This research project was designed as a descriptive study of home educating families living in southwestern lower Michigan during the fall of 1987. Data was gathered using a survey covering the following general topics:

General family description
Educational background of teacher(s)
Curriculum and instructional practices
Rating of confidence in performing teaching tasks
Social interaction of parents and children
Reasons for choosing this alternative
Advantages and disadvantages
Any additional comments.

This study is limited by two factors, geography and willingness to respond. Geographically, only a few preselected families in southwestern lower Michigan were

surveyed. The study is further limited by those who were willing to respond to a questionnaire in a state where current rules pertaining to home educators can have negative legal implications. One of the regulations of Michigan's Department of Education limits the legality of home educating to those parents who are certified to teach. This means any parents not having a teaching certificate could be charged with violation if they were to be identified because of their response to a survey/questionnaire. On the survey I did request total anonymity, asking that no personal identification be given on any portion of the survey.

LITERATURE REVIEW

As the home education movement has mushroomed in the 1980s, so has the literature related to it. In examining this literature, basic themes occur repeatedly and consistently. In this review you will hear from some of the recognized spokesmen of the homeschooling movement. Due to limited personal knowledge of legal matters, I have chosen to not delve into legal arguments. The following themes will be covered:

I. Philosophical roots of the home education movement

II. Concern for the socialization of home educated children

III. Reasons why this is considered a good educational alternative

IV. State regulations and qualifications of home educators

V. Review of professional resources for home educators

I. PHILOSOPHICAL ROOTS OF THE HOME EDUCATION MOVEMENT

It is generally recognized, both historically and traditionally, that a strong family unit is the foundation of a stable society. Susan Schaeffer Macaulay, author and daughter of philosopher Francis Schaeffer, reflects this thinking when she writes, "Families and teachers who are concerned know that the number one priority in society is for a functional family unit." (1987, p. x Wilson) Raymond Moore, one of America's foremost authorities on home education, founder of the Hewitt Research Foundation, and developmental psychologist, supports this view.

> Society cannot survive without the family. Greece went down when its parents gave their children to the state. That great nation was taken over by Rome, which in several centuries followed suit. And so dereliction has traveled through societies until today our nation is a tragic mirror of these earlier societies and one of the cultures more indifferent to family closeness. (1987, p. 28)

Moore applies these history lessons to our current American culture when stating, "leading social researchers predict the death of our democratic society within a generation." (1981, pp. 13-14)

A strong family unit is only one of several pillars of a society. Education of the next generation is another. Gregg Harris, lecturer and director of 'The Home Schooling Workshop,' explains the importance of the educational pillar by quoting Aristotle, "The fate of empires depends on the education of youth." (1988, p. 4)

We now look at what is happening in America in the

1980s to these two important pillars of society: the family unit, and the education of its youth. John Whitehead shares his perspective.

> There are three streams of influence affecting the traditional family structure.
>
> The first is the rights of parents. Traditionally very strong, the rights of parents in contemporary society are being challenged.
>
> Second, the concept of children's liberation. This movement goes beyond urging the rights of children. It, instead, argues that children are to be treated as if they are adults.
>
> The third major force is actual or threatened intervention of the state into the family structure. Statist intervention grows more pervasive each day. This is a menace to legitimate family structures and the lawful exercise of parental rights.
>
> There has occurred a continual shift toward the interest of children in family situations where the state becomes involved. This is a clear break with history. If it continues to grow, many legitimate parental actions and practices will be brought into question on a perpetual basis. (1985, p. 18)

Moore agrees with Whitehead's conclusions. Moore states:

> Fathers and mothers are much more absorbed in their wants and 'freedoms' than they are with the needs of their children, not realizing that freedom without responsibility eventually means death. Here in America other institutions, especially schools, have tended to accommodate this parental lethargy rather than try to correct it. Ultimately, they have usurped more and more control and because of their natural limitations have encouraged these negative social developments. Our society is on a destruction course which can only be turned if parents demonstrate in word and action that they intend to retrieve control of their own. (1987, pp. 28-29)

As the traditional family structure gradually dissolves, due to a combination of factors, other groups or institutions are gradually stepping in to do the job that

has been laid aside by the family. One such institution that has picked up many former family functions is the educational system. This has necessitated a change in its structure and function. Noted child psychologist David Elkind, in exploring the effects of hurrying and stress on a child, amplifies on how the schools have changed.

> Our schools have become increasingly industrialized and product-oriented. Teachers are unionized, textbooks are standardized on a national level, and testing has become mechanized (machine scored) and more pervasive as a consequence.
>
> Schools today hurry children because administrators are under stress to produce better products. This blinds them to what we know about children and leads them to treat children like empty bottles on an assembly line getting a little fuller at each grade level. This factory emphasis hurries children because it ignores individual differences in mental abilities and learning rates. The child who cannot keep up in this system, even if only temporarily, is often regarded as a defective vessel and is labeled learning disabled or minimally brain damaged or hyperactive.
>
> The rigid age grouping of our schools, in which all curriculum and teaching are tightly sequenced, is easily abused when administrators are under stress. (1981, pp. 47-48)

Moore expands on this point by looking at a present-day classroom.

> In a conventional classroom, the teacher's time is preoccupied with many kinds of educational litter - reports, films, exercises - while trying to understand the individual differences of MANY children. (1987, p. 31)

As the public grows in its awareness of these facts, the unrest and criticism grows. On one hand, families that are no longer traditional, either by choice or by chance, make increasing demands on the school to take over former

family functions. On the other hand, families that are trying to maintain a more traditional unit make the opposite demands - that the schools not invade family functions. Both sides try to pressure the system to enact change to accommodate their wishes.

Undeniably, whenever a system (e.g. educational) takes over family responsibilities, it will do so from a particular perspective. Harris elaborates on this.

> The real conflict over education in America today isn't primarily within the four walls of a public school classroom; rather, it lies between two very different schools of thought, both having their own very different moral goals, both propagating their own distinctive worldview, both wanting to produce a very different kind of human being. (1988, p. 8)

This means that professional educators may hold goals and expectations that conflict with the goals and expectations of some of the families they teach. Herein lies the conflict. Psychology Professor Paul Vitz of New York University explains it this way:

> Given the overwhelming secular philosophies characterizing American education in the last fifty years, it is to be expected that leaders in education will now differ markedly from the general American public in the area of basic moral values. This has been documented in the Connecticut Mutual Life Report on American Values in the 80's, where, for example, it is reported that 65% of the general public describes abortion as morally wrong while only 26% of education leaders describe it as wrong; 74% of our education leaders say that abortion is "not a moral issue." Likewise, on many other traditional values and moral issues, the education leaders are reported to be markedly more liberal than the public. This report documents the case that the leaders of education are consistently more liberal than leaders of business, voluntary associations, the military, and, not surprisingly, religious leaders. It is interesting to

note that government leaders had moral positions very similar to those in education. (1986, p. 87)

Not only do some of the professional educators differ from some of the public they serve, textbooks represent a distinctive world view not necessarily held by all. As Professor Vitz studied textbooks commonly used in public school classrooms he made some disturbing discoveries.

> Public school textbooks commonly exclude the history, heritage, beliefs, and values of millions of Americans. Those who believe in the traditional family are not represented. Those who believe in free enterprise are not represented. Those whose politics are conservative are almost unrepresented. Above all, those who are committed to their religious tradition - at the very least as an important part of the historical record - are not represented.
>
> Over and over, we have seen that liberal and secular bias is primarily accomplished by exclusion, by leaving out the opposing position. Such a bias is much harder to observe than a positive vilification or direct criticism, but it is the essence of censorship. It is effective not only because it is hard to observe - it isn't there - and therefore hard to counteract, but also because it makes only the liberal, secular positions familiar and plausible. As a result, the millions of Americans who hold conservative, traditional, and religious positions are made to appear irrelevant, strange, on the fringe, old-fashioned, reactionary. (1986, pp. 77-78)

A further factor to be considered - one that is close to everyone's heart - is the continually growing cost of education. Harris explains this frustration.

> All those American tax dollars paying for programs, policies, and personnel that are destructive to the values of most of our citizens - there's something inherently unjust about that. (1988, p. 29)

Professor Vitz supports and expands the charge.

> Tens of millions of Americans are paying school taxes to support a system that fails to represent their

> beliefs, values, history, and heritage. This is serious injustice. Quite simply, it is a classic case of "taxation without representation."
>
> Thomas Jefferson - hardly a reliable friend of religion - stated the principle clearly when he wrote:
>
> To compel a man to furnish funds for the propagation of ideas he disbelieves and abhors is sinful and tyrannical. (1986, p. 91)

In considering the ramifications of these issues, it is not surprising to observe a growing group seriously considering alternatives - both to the disintegrating family unit and to the educational structure and process.

One educational alternative being considered and embraced by growing numbers is home education. This springs from people reevaluating both their personal family responsibilities and the current educational system that allows values to be presented by both educators and textbooks that conflict with the family's own values. They further react to the injustice of having to pay for an education that does not represent - or even examine - their personally held views. These Americans are exercising a freedom of choice they believe is inherently theirs by virtue of their citizenship.

Personally, I understand this small-but-growing group of Americans. Having spent six years as a professional educator, I clearly understand the inherent limitations of the educational system. In trying to meet the needs of the many, choices must be made. Whenever one option is chosen, other options are eliminated. No one - person or system -

can provide all things to all men.

When considering the ongoing disintegration of the family structure and the close interrelation between the educational system and the family, the logic is clear: alternatives must be accommodated. Home education is one such alternative that is being embraced by increasing numbers of families across America in the 1980s - including mine.

II. CONCERN FOR THE SOCIALIZATION OF HOME EDUCATED CHILDREN

When the educational alternative of home education is discussed, one of the first questions asked usually pertains to socialization. In this section, parameters of this topic will be scrutinized.

To begin, we examine a definition of socialization. Raymond Ballmann, member of the Board of Directors of the National Association for Christian Home Education, gives this definition.

> There are two types of socialization: positive and negative. Positive socialization helps a child to grow and develop to his full potential in life. When a child's personality develops in a warm atmosphere of love and acceptance, he will usually socialize well with all age groups, including his own. Negative socialization, on the other hand, separates a child from his parents and restricts a child's socializing primarily to his age-mates. This can have detrimental and long-term affects on a child's potential sociability among a wide age disbursement. (1987, p. 71)

Ballmann's definition offers two types of socialization - positive and negative. Dr. Urie Bronfenbrenner, Professor at Cornell University, not only defines socialization, but goes further to explain how it occurs.

> It is primarily through observing, playing and working with others older and younger than himself that a child discovers both what he can do and who he can become - that he develops both his ability and his identity. It is primarily through exposure and interaction with adults and children of different ages that a child acquires new interests and skills and learns the meaning of tolerance, cooperation, and compassion. (1975, p. 664)

Clearly Dr. Bronfenbrenner's definition is of positive

socialization. He describes a process that was formerly carried out by the traditional family unit. With the current breakdown of this type of family, people are now compelled to go elsewhere to complete the process of 1) developing an identity, and 2) discovering an ability - thus advancing a positive self-esteem.

Whitehead goes even further to describe the socialization process as it is currently integrated into the educational system.

> Mass state education has forced children into horizontal peer relationships, thereby abrogating the traditional vertical relationships with adults. It is here that a major part of the socialization process has been assumed by the public schools. As a consequence, there has been a move away from parental relationships to peer relationships along with all the trappings of "peer pressure."
>
> Compulsory public education produces a peer group that occupies a place of primary importance in the life of the student.
>
> Indeed, a primary function of public education, as sociologists argue, is to provide for a "uniform orientation at the societal level."
>
> A negative effect of public education socialization is its persistent conformity. Conformity to behavior and beliefs of fellow-students is at very best strong. Sometimes conformity becomes an obsessive drive of students. It almost always has a harmful effect on parent-child relations.
>
> A further negative effect is that the rare nonconforming student who attempts to withstand such socialization pressures is generally, as psychological and sociological studies show, rejected as a deviant or stigmatized in various ways. (1985, p. 146)

Interestingly, it is in the educational system's setting that we first hear of negative socialization, conformity,

and peer pressure. This is a setting of large groups, segmented by age, with a variation of authority figures. The individual, with his developmental needs, becomes overpowered by the expectations and demands of others - equal in age and equally developmentally needy.

In contrast, Moore explains the socialization process as it can occur in a home education setting - a reflection of the traditional family.

> Parents are by far the best socializers of their children.
>
> Parents who take their children into their daily activities on a warm, continuing consistent basis until they are eight to ten will find that their youngsters generally feel secure as part of the family corporation.
>
> They experience the highest quality of play with warm, responsive parents who also enjoy holding and reading to them, and who allow them time alone to work out their own fantasies and to rest. Such children feel needed, wanted, and depended upon. They sense that they are integral parts in the family corporation. This feeling of belongingness and of the privilege of helping brings a sound sense of self-worth and altruism which are the crucial foundation stones of positive sociability. They move on a single, uncluttered track toward a secure and productive life.
>
> Such children are more deliberate and settled, less inclined to be hyperactive. As young children they are less demanding of their parents, and more likely to feel secure when their mothers and fathers are gone for brief periods. Although more friendly, they are also more independent of peer values as they grow older. In short, they are happier, better adjusted, more thoughtful, competent, and sociable children. (1981, pp. 38-40)

Moore supports his idyllic claims by citing University of Chicago's Benjamin Bloom. Initially, Bloom was a vocal advocate behind the early schooling movement. His current

position is just the opposite.

> In 1980, he (Bloom) came to the conclusion that the home is, in fact, the best educational nest, parents are generally the best teachers, and parents are educable. (1984, p. 34)

Interestingly, socialization is an area where home educators are often unjustly criticized. In reality, home schoolers are some of the best socially-adjusted people around, according to Ballmann (1987,p.71). This assertion is supported by research done by John Wesley Taylor V in 1986. The Parent Educator and Family Report gives a summary of his research results.

> Based on one of the best-validated self-concept scales available, a random sampling of home school children from approximately 45,000 home schooling addresses found that half of these children scored "at or above the 91st percentile" - 41% higher than the average, conventionally schooled child. Since self-concept is considered to be a basic dynamic of positive sociability, this answers the often heard skepticism suggesting that home schoolers are inferior in socialization. (May/June 1986)

Ballmann gives possible reasons for such results.

> Home schooled children tend to radiate a higher degree of self-respect and confidence because of three main factors: 1) absence of peer criticism and dependency, 2) parental nearness, and 3) parental monitoring and encouragement. (1987, p. 68)

Considering all of this, one is compelled to evaluate this different perspective of socialization - one not often heard or regarded as credible. Interestingly, some home educating families give socialization as a reason for choosing this educational alternative. They want to offer their children the benefits of positive socialization and

minimize the potential for negative socialization.

One doesn't have to look far in today's media sources (i.e., TV, newspapers, magazines) to hear many sources giving the same message: "Don't give in to peer pressure!" Personally, I do not follow the logic of placing children in an environment (educational system) that produces a distinctive negative effect which has to be vigorously - and not always successfully - counteracted a few years later.

A socialization-related accusation faced by home educators is that of overprotecting their children from the real world. Ballmann explains this argument.

> Some contend that the "realities" which children need exposure to consist of dirty language, rebelliousness, and a vile, degenerate environment. They argue that since this is what life is "really" like, children need to be "exposed." But this is an unsatisfactory argument that most home educators simply aren't buying. It is true that there is a measure of sheltering that exists among home schoolers. But is this not the place and function of the home? Responsible, godly parents should stand as a buffer between their tender, young child and the evil harshness of his world. Parents should not allow their children exposure to the raw onslaughts of worldliness and demonic activity, all in the name of "socialization."
>
> Nurseries grow seedlings in greenhouses, because that is where they grow best. The new plants can flourish because they are protected from subfreezing temperatures and strong winter winds. When spring arrives, the plants are stronger and more mature and ready to be transplanted. Soon they are ready to become productive. But the early sheltering was a necessary part of the growth process.
>
> Children too need time to grow and be trained in the Word of God before they are ready for the stark realities of the world. Protection and godly training in the early years make a child stronger and better prepared for the world - not weak and unprepared, as some suggest. As a result of a certain amount of

sheltering, they can become productive citizens.

> Parents should not feel obligated in the least to subject their children to a hedonistic and debauched philosophy of life for the sake of exposure. That line of reasoning is totally without merit. It naturally leads into the idea that if a little exposure is good, then more exposure is better. The implications from here are obvious.
>
> Once we clear away the semantic underbrush, we can decide intelligently what kind of socialization we want for our children, positive or negative. (1987, pp.72-74)

I agree with Ballmann's logic and conclusions. Protection during early, developmental years for purposes of nurturing and growth is evident in many arenas: plant, animal, and aquatic. Why should it be considered wrong or bad in the most vital arena, human development?

In spite of the many benefits of positive socialization gained in a home-schooling environment, many families will not choose such an educational alternative due to the high personal cost (not financial) implicit in such a job. Many parents simply are not willing to pay the personal price. Moore elaborates on this idea.

> But there is a price to pay. And many psychologists, legislators, policy-makers, and writers think most parents will not pay it. Many of these critics agree that for most families parent education is a greater need than preschool, but insist that our mothers and fathers are so corroded with license (freedom without responsibility) and convention that efforts at reform are exercises in futility. We have moved enough among the ghettoes and the mansions, and the houses in between, to understand this funeral song.
>
> Yet we have found strong courage in many parents. When informed of their children's developmental needs and the likely rewards of meeting them, those who are thoughtful and honest and concerned for their youngsters are

willing to change their life styles. (1981, pp. 40-41)

In summary, it must be recognized that any educational alternative contains inherent, unknown social risk factors. Society collectively has an obligation to carefully examine and evaluate the outcomes of each alternative. While each family must be given freedom to make their own educational choice for their children, they must also be responsible to deal with its outcome. The long-term results of this other educational alternative and its potential socialization results can only be seen and evaluated in the future.

III. REASONS WHY THIS IS CONSIDERED A GOOD EDUCATIONAL ALTERNATIVE

Each family that chooses to home educate does so for a variety of reasons. However, there are a few reasons common to most home educating families. Harris describes the composition of the largest and fastest-growing sector of the movement.

> The evangelical Christian parents who want the educational advantages of home schooling and who want to give their children the training for all of life that the Bible calls on parents to provide...comprise the largest and fastest-growing sector of the home school movement. (1988, p. 84)

The following six reasons are mentioned repeatedly by a variety of authors.

A. Conducive for academic excellence
B. Conducive for teaching character and moral values that are consistent with parental values
C. Conducive for strengthening the family unit
D. Conducive for fulfilling religious convictions
E. Conducive for positive socialization
F. Conducive for integrating education with living

These are not listed in any particular order or priority. Each reason will be presented and discussed separately.

A. Conducive for academic excellence

Moore and Ballmann agree with most professional educators that the tutorial method of education has never been excelled. Ballmann cites the following research giving evidence of the academic excellence of home education.

> A recent six-year Stanford study which compared home schooled children and traditionally schooled children found that home schoolers are significantly higher in achievement, behavior, and social perception. In a study of youngsters taken to court because of home education, the Hewitt Research Foundation has found that home schoolers achieve percentile scores 30 points higher than national averages on standardized tests.
>
> Most parents do not home school purely for academic reasons. But they could make a good case for it if they did. (1987, pp. 64-65)

Interestingly, Elkind contends that parents who teach their children at home should not do so purely for the purpose of increasing their child's intelligence.

> Whereas (public) schools are concerned with children's acquisition of knowledge and with their attainment of skills, schools in the home have a different objective. Advocates of this sort of schooling are concerned with making children brighter by early intellectual stimulation. Such programs advocate hurrying children into academic subjects early, with the hopes of increasing their intelligence. (1981, p. 49)
>
> Clearly there is much that parents can and should do to promote the intellectual development of their children, but this need not be and probably shouldn't be formal instruction. Taking the time to talk to children, to answer their questions is an important form of intellectual stimulation; reading to your child is another. Going on trips to the park, the zoo, the museum, and the country are important learning experiences for children. Young children, after all, don't know the world very well and the best education parents can provide is to acquaint them with that world through language, shared activities, and trips in the

context of love and protection. (1981, p. 67)

Since the home educational setting closely resembles a tutorial setting, it should not be surprising to observe a high level of academic achievement. The amount of individual attention given at home is much greater than that possible in a large classroom setting. Ballmann supports this logic.

> In most conventional schools, teachers have to contend with twenty, thirty or more students under varying circumstances, leaving little time for one-on-one personal encounters. Despite a good teacher's best efforts, this can often impede the learning process. Large classroom instruction has never been proven to be a superior method of teaching, but is used in order to accomplish the goals of mass education.
>
> Home educators, on the other hand, are able to engage in relatively large amounts of one-on-one instruction. This enables them to provide a quality education, and with far less time and expense.
>
> Researchers have found that the tutorial method of instruction has never been excelled by institutions when it comes to fundamental learning. (1987, p. 81)

Harris concurs and further elaborates on other disadvantages inherent in a large classroom setting.

> In a classroom of twenty or more students, a teacher must split her time and attention into very small segments. The students who demand the most attention are not always those with the greatest needs.
>
> Individual attention, however, provides a much better foundation for teaching and learning. The teacher can get to know the student and his needs much better, discover the best ways to motivate the child, and best slant the pacing and content of study to the student's interests and abilities.
>
> In the typical classroom, the teacher is not able to closely monitor the level of difficulty for each student. He cannot shape the curriculum so that each student is properly challenged. Instead, he has to aim

> for the average child, with the inevitable result that a number of students on either side of average will suffer. (1988, p. 53)

In considering the motivation behind providing the most advantageous learning setting possible, it is essential to realize that the student's attitude toward learning is of ultimate importance. Mary Pride, home educator and author, states the results of a positive attitude toward learning, "To the real student, learning is not drudgery, even if it involves serious labor. It is meat and drink for his soul." (1988, p. 31 Schoolproof)

Interestingly, I found no mention of any disadvantages inherent in an extended tutoring setting - such as home education would provide. However, from personal experience, I have found some weaknesses that need to be addressed. They are as follows:

1) Lack of verbal interaction with a group on a variety of subjects. While verbal interaction is not necessary for learning to occur, it does play an important role. When verbalizing an idea, the idea is clarified both to the student and to the teacher. Other listeners can gain greater understanding as well. It provides evidence of how well the concept is understood. It also contributes to self-esteem when praise is given in front of peers.

2) Lack of exposure to opinions held by other people/children. The parent/teacher must contribute all such other opinions, if a well-balanced picture is to be

offered.

3) Lack of opportunity to practice cooperative behavior (i.e., listening, taking turns, expressing an idea clearly and concisely). Such opportunities would depend on family size in a home setting. A larger family would provide more opportunity than would a smaller family.

4) The teacher/parent's potential loss of objectivity due to the intense, continuous interaction. Loss of perspective and distorted expectations can result. Such detrimental results can negate other positive benefits of a home educational setting.

Each of these potential weaknesses has an indirect affect on academic excellence. While it is possible to accommodate these areas, I did not see them being addressed in the literature reviewed. They definitely need to be recognized and addressed.

In addressing these cons of individualized instruction, it must be recognized that individualized instruction has been - and continues to be - a goal of professional educators. While implementation continues to be attempted in a classroom setting, none is ever as totally achieved as in a tutoring setting.

Professional educators use the large group setting as advantageously as possible, considering it is the only option they have to deal with. Thus it is understandable why a large segment of professional training deals with

group management techniques applied to a classroom setting.

The ultimate academic goal of self-motivated, self-initiated, self-directed learning is more easily accommodated in a home setting, and severely limited in a large group setting.

B. Conducive for teaching character and moral values that are consistent with parental values

This is considered a key issue by home educators. Some parents want to reclaim the right, responsibility, and opportunity to impart character qualities and moral values that are consistent with their personal philosophy.

We first look at the philosophical arguments of who does have or should have the right and responsibility for teaching character and moral values - parents or professional educators. John Holt, professional educator and home education advocate, states the argument well.

> How are we going to prevent parents with narrow and bigoted ideas from passing these on to their children?
>
> The first question we have to answer is, do we have a right to try to prevent it?
>
> One of the main differences between a free country and a police state, I always thought, was that in a free country, as long as you obeyed the law, you could believe whatever you liked. Your beliefs were none of the government's business. Far less was it any of the government's business to say that one set of ideas was good and another set bad, or that schools should promote the good and stamp out the bad. Have we given up these principles? And if we haven't, do we really want to? Suppose we decided to give the government the power, through compulsory schools, to promote good ideas and put down bad. To whom would we then give the power to decide WHICH ideas were good and which bad? To legislatures? To state boards of education? To local school boards?
>
> Anyone who thinks seriously about these questions will surely agree that no one in government should have such power. From this it must follow that people have the right not only to believe what they want, but to try to pass their beliefs along to their children. We can't say that some people have this right while others do not.

> Since any school, whether by what it says or what it does, must promote SOME ideas, it follows that while people who approve of the ideas being taught or promoted in government schools may be glad to send their children there, people who don't approve of those ideas should have some other choice. This is essentially what the U.S. Supreme court said in Pierce v. Society of Sisters.
>
> One of the reasons why growing numbers of people are so passionately opposed to the public schools is that these schools are in fact acting as if someone HAD explicitly and legally given them the power to promote one set of ideas and to put down others. A fairly small group of people, educational bureaucrats at the state and federal level, who largely control what schools say and do, are more and more using the schools to promote whatever ideas they happen to think will be good for the children, or the country. But we have never formally decided, through any political process, to give the schools such power, far less agreed on what ideas we would like the schools to promote. On the contrary, there is every reason to believe that large majorities of the people strongly dislike many or most of the ideas that most schools promote today. (1981, pp. 41-42)

Because values are such a crucial part of each child's development, they must not be ignored, reduced to a common denominator, or taught only by implication. Values held by a family are unique to that family, must be respected as such, and not be contradicted or undermined by a school system. There is no feasible way a school system can possibly teach character qualities and moral values that agree with all the families represented in any given class. Yet values (of great variety) are continually, implicitly exhibited, and therefore taught, if only by example and/or exclusion. Families who choose a public/private educational alternative consequently relinquish their exclusive right and responsibility for imparting their unique value system

to their children. Families who choose the home educational alternative retain the right and responsibility to impart their values as they choose. This is precisely the reason given by many for choosing this educational alternative.

The next issue then is how to accomplish the task. Ballmann elaborates on when and how parents can impart moral values.

> Most home schooling parents aim for moral excellence. They know that morality is either "taught," "corrupted," or "ignored."
>
> Morality that is "taught" instructs and reinforces what is true, honorable, right, pure, honest, respectable, and good.
>
> Morality is "corrupted" when it instructs and reinforces what is immoral, impure, unclean, selfish, sensuous, shameful. "Corrupted" morality pollutes the minds of children.
>
> Morality is "ignored" when schools and teachers lead students to believe that morality has no absolutes. They teach that life is morally neutral.
>
> Further, home educators know the importance of instilling morality when children are young and their spirit and character are developing. (1987, pp. 66-67)

Harris concurs, and further elaborates.

> By teaching your child at home, you can control the values that are instilled. You can choose a curriculum that undergirds your faith and presents it attractively and persuasively. (1988, p. 52)

Thus proper development of a child's character and moral value system can be attempted. The two key factors are: 1) an early introduction, and 2) using a curriculum consistent with parental values. Zig Ziglar, widely acclaimed motivational speaker, gives further support to such

training.

> A solid foundation for children involves a solid moral base. The home is the place to lay the foundation for high moral values. Franklin Delano Roosevelt said, "To train a man in mind and not in morals is to train a menace to society." Steven Muller, president of Johns Hopkins University, summarized this interplay of values, "The failure to rally around a set of values means that universities are turning out potentially highly-skilled barbarians." (1985, p. 47)

Ziglar then gives two principles for raising positive kids in a negative world.

> The first principle is: <u>You are what you are and where you are because of what has gone into your mind</u>, and you can change what you are and where you are by changing what goes into your mind. In other words, your thinking directly affects your performance.
>
> The second principle is: <u>Life is not easy</u> - as a matter of fact - <u>it's tough, very tough</u>. I have found out that if you are tough on yourself, life will be much easier on you. That's why it's so important for parents to train children at an early age to be self-controlled. Developing self-control often requires painful learning experiences, but the result is well worth the effort. (1985, pp. 18, 20)

Thus home educating parents are given further direction and motivation in pursuing their goal of teaching enduring character and moral values.

C. Conducive for strengthening the family unit

The steady disintegration of the family unit in America has caused a segment of the population to resolve to reverse this pattern in their own home.

Ballmann explains how the family unit is strengthened by home education.

> Home schoolers develop a unique bond of closeness with their parents. This unique bonding has the potential for producing deeper interrelationships, love, trust, and family dependency. This in turn produces more meaningful communication, emotional intimacy, and a closer family life. (1987, p. 82)

Harris explains how a strong family unit is advantageous in the teaching process.

> You as a parent have a big advantage in teaching your child simply because you ARE the parent. You may think that you're something less than the world's best parent. You might also THINK that you can't possibly educate your child as well as a state certified teacher might. But because, subjectively, you are the most significant and important person in the world to your child, YOU HAVE GREATER CREDIBILITY WITH HIM AND CAN GET MORE MILEAGE OUT OF INSTRUCTIONAL TIME THAN ANYONE ELSE COULD. And THAT is an OBJECTIVE reality.
>
> This is one of the ways God has designed us a human beings, making young children very teachable and wanting to be like the most significant people in their lives. And those "most significant people" are meant to be the parents. (1988, pp. 51-52)

Ballmann gives further support to this argument by quoting World Health Organization head John Bowlby, who has concluded:

> Even a relatively bad home is generally better than a good institution. (1987, p. 62)

Ziglar looks at the time investment required as a bargain!

The time-and-energy-investment bargain of all time is

> that time and effort you give to your kids. I'm obviously talking about quality time here, but it is represented by a considerable amount of quantity time. (1985, pp. 106, 107)
>
> A study involving 2,400 fifth graders revealed that the ONE THING THAT UPSET THE CHILDREN THE MOST WAS SPENDING TOO LITTLE TIME WITH THEIR PARENTS. (1985, p. 114)

It must be noted that while home education provides a setting conducive for undergirding the family unit, the process is not easy, nor the product guaranteed. The interpersonal relationships in any family are dynamic and continually affected by external and internal pressures. Consistently communicating and understanding is ongoing hard work. It can never be taken for granted or assumed. In fact, pressure produced from the close continual interaction in a home education environment could actually do the opposite of intended and drive parent and child farther apart. I did not find these potential weaknesses addressed in the literature reviewed.

D. Conducive for fulfilling religious convictions

From the start it must be understood that religious convictions are in a totally subjective realm. Each individual responds to his/her personal religious beliefs differently. When outward action is based on inward conviction, observers conclude that strong convictions (religious or otherwise) are held. This may or may not be true. Convictions are extremely difficult, if not impossible, to accurately discern.

Harris explains how a religious conviction can become the motivation for home education.

> Most home schooling parents are Christians who are returning to home schooling because they have come to grips with their God-given responsibility to provide their children's education. They know that God has given them an awesome stewardship over their children for a VERY short while. And they must make the most of it. Practically, that means that they don't simply have a RIGHT to supervise the education of their children; they have a DUTY. (1988, pp. 2-3)

Ballmann expands the argument. He explains that religious convictions can be not only a motivation, but also a source of strength.

> It is true that most who home school do so because of religious convictions. This is also what gives home schoolers their power and effectiveness. (1987,p.75)

It is futile to argue this kind of reasoning. If such convictions are held, it follows that people will act according to their convictions, unless otherwise restricted. This is particularly true in America, recognized home of religious freedom.

E. Conducive for positive socialization

Since the topic of socialization has been discussed earlier in this paper (see pp.12-18), only a brief summary will be given here. Harris gives a good synopsis.

> A big advantage of home schooling is, ironically, in an area where the criticisms have been most strident. Namely, home schooling provides a much healthier and better socialization process for children than the typical classroom.
>
> Common sense tells us, and innumerable studies verify, that people become like those with whom they spend large amounts of time.
>
> Children need a sense of identity. They need to know who they are in relation to other people. This helps them feel secure. When children spend time with their parents in a warm and loving atmosphere, they usually learn to enjoy being with all age groups, including their own. On the other hand, when children spend more time with their age peers than they do with their parents (as is the case with typical classroom schooling), they tend to become oriented towards their peers.
>
> Some parents fear that a child who isn't exposed to the "real world" while he is young won't be able to cope with it later. But don't worry, the real world has a way of intruding into everyone's life. In our media intensive society, you cannot hide for long. (1988, pp. 55-56)

I personally concur with these views. As I have watched our own two children develop socially over the past five years, these concepts have been confirmed.

F. Conducive for integrating education with living

One broad educational goal of all educators is to prepare an individual to take a meaningful place in society. Home educators feel this is best accomplished by regularly integrating life with academic pursuits. Susan Schaeffer Macaulay, home educated herself and currently home educating her family, waxes eloquent on this idea.

> Education is an atmosphere, a discipline, a life.
>
> Education is taking place during all of the waking hours.
>
> We must take steps to provide a diet which opens doors for each child to build a relationship with God, other persons, and the universe. Our first concern is to open the door to the knowledge of God: putting a child in touch with the God who is there. A parent who knows that God is not an emotional projection or a psychological hope will almost unconsciously include the existence of God in the world view and the atmosphere of life with which he surrounds the child.
>
> Next is the knowledge of man: putting a child in touch with the human race. We are to introduce the child to the living persons who peopled history, the episodes which are full of dramatic and emotional interest, and to the general consequence of the whole. We know what happens when certain absolutes are forgotten, when chaos reigns, or when tyranny takes over. Having known, having considered, we then are in a position to make more understanding judgments, choices.
>
> Finally, a knowledge of the universe: putting a child in touch with his planet. Then the child can enjoy and understand his relationship with the world and universe he lives in. So that he can say, "I feel at home here, I belong; I understand, appreciate, know."
> (1985, pp. 90, 92-93, 106-107, 133)

Ballmann adds that such an integration is possible because, "home schoolers ... are not confined by time and space barriers." (1987, p. 84)

I agree that such integration is desired and possible. I have personally recognized the following contributions such integration has made in the lives of our own children:

1) growth in personal responsibility,

2) growth in self-esteem,

3) growth in creative thinking.

These attitudes are noticeably declining yet desperately needed in current times!

I have further recognized the following problem inherent in attempting such integration, namely - balance. The innumerable daily decisions faced by the parent/teacher boil down to urgent versus important. Depending on the maturity level (self-control) of the parent/teacher, freedom can easily turns into license. The literature reviewed did not address this issue. I contend that, due to human nature, there should be some directives and accountability for home educators. However, any required accountability will never guarantee personal integrity and responsibility. The next section looks more closely at this in examining the qualifications for home educators.

IV. STATE REGULATIONS AND QUALIFICATIONS OF HOME EDUCATORS

This is perhaps one of the most widely debated issues surrounding the home schooling movement in Michigan. State Department of Education regulations pertaining to public and private education also apply to home educators. Until a law is passed, these regulations are the standard. They are interpreted by individual families, local superintendents, and intermediate school districts. Invariably there are differing interpretations, which accounts for the wide variety of practices across the state. The need for a law becomes more urgent as time passes. Naturally, differing viewpoints are held by legislators, administrators, professional educators, and home educators.

We begin this section by examining a summary of the current state regulations. For the complete document, see Appendix A.

1. All instruction must be given by a Michigan certified teacher.
2. The curriculum must be comparable to that offered by the local public or private school.
3. Children must have a minimum of 180 days and 900 hours of instruction.
4. Children taught in the home shall be be given instruction in:
    a. The Constitution of the United States
    b. The Constitution of the State of Michigan
    c. The history and present form of government of both the United States and the State of Michigan

There are several possible points of contention, but the one under debate in Michigan is the first - the

regulation requiring teacher certification. Most home educators and their supporters argue that certification requirements, while appropriate for those involved in public or private education, are not appropriate to apply to home educators. Whitehead argues this point.

> The idea that only "professional" educators are qualified to teach children is a myth perpetuated by the educational establishment. Another more absurd myth is the concept that teachers must be certified by the state in order to be qualified to teach. The family can recover the education function again. (1985, p. 148)

Moore supports this view by recalling the statement of former University of Chicago professor Don Erickson, that a teaching certificate does not guarantee good teaching. (1982, p. 11) John Holt takes it one step further and defines qualified.

> Educators . . . define "qualified" to mean teachers trained in schools in education and holding teaching certificates. They assume that to teach children involves a host of mysterious skills that can be learned only in schools of education and that are in fact taught there; that people who have this training teach much better than those who do not; and indeed that people who have not had this training are not competent to teach at all.
>
> None of these assumptions are true.
>
> As for the idea that certified teachers teach better than uncertified, or that uncertified teachers cannot teach at all, there is not a shred of evidence to support it, and a great deal against it. (1981, pp. 51-52)

Harris supports this claim with this question.

> Just recall for a moment the weak academic record of most public schools. These schools are staffed almost ENTIRELY by college-educated, state-certified teachers, and yet they've been frustrated for years in the job of training their students. Thus, credentials and training

> alone can't get the job done. There's no evidence that a certified teacher can do a better job of educating your child than you can. If there were, believe me, we would all hear about it. The NEA is still looking for that evidence. (1988, p. 91)

Pride concurs with them all, "Teaching is not so very mysterious, after all. It may be miraculous, but it is not mysterious." (1988, p.13 Schoolproof) She goes on to give her definition of a good teacher.

> Good teachers are marvelously creative people who have learned some basic ways to approach any teaching problem. The difference between such a teacher and the average mom or dad is that the teacher has learned to THINK LIKE A TEACHER. He or she has a framework of approaches into which new ideas easily and painlessly fit. The REALLY good teachers also have an instinctive sense as to which approach works best for each situation as it arises. (1988, p.66 Schoolproof)

After asserting that certification requirements alone do not guarantee a good teacher, the reasoning is given as to why parents can qualify as home educators. Harris begins with four reasons.

> First, we need to remember that home schooling or tutoring was the normal form of schooling throughout history until just a few decades ago. If parents in ages past could give their children a good education at home, there's no reason to think that you can't, especially now that tools, resources, and curricula of the highest quality are readily available everywhere.
>
> Second, we need to keep in mind the fact that God never gives us a responsibility without also providing the means and the strength to fulfill it. He knows our weaknesses and our fears, and He knows we can't do it alone. He's also ready to give us what we need if we'll only ask.
>
> Third, we can look at the many more or less average parents who are already home schooling their children and doing a good job of it , and there are thousands of them. The fact that they're able to make it work means there's a good chance you can, too.

> Finally, there's no one more motivated than YOU to see your child trained well, not only in academics but in all areas of life. And that motivation to do the job well, to be a good example and to work at becoming a better teacher, is far more important than a diploma on the wall. You will learn as you teach. You'll grow up as a teacher as your children grow up as students. (1988, pp. 91-92)

Ballmann contributes two more ideas.

> Educational bureaucrats do not want parents to even entertain the idea of teaching their own children. There are two commonly accepted reasons. First, parents who effectively home school expose the miserable failures and inadequacies of public education. Home schoolers are a growing threat to their educational monopoly.
>
> Secondly, home schoolers are seen as robbers of their vast enrollment coffers, since public schools receive funds according to their per capita attendance. (1987, pp. 61-62)

Moore expresses similar sentiments.

> We educators have done a colossal job of brainwashing them (parents) into thinking we can out-parent them. Even the University of Chicago's Benjamin Bloom, whose research helped make early schooling a popular trend in this country, now admits that parents are the best teachers, and that they can be educated as teachers in the home. (1982, p. 18)

Holt gives a historical perspective to current

certification requirements.

> Human beings have been sharing information and skills, and passing along to their children whatever they knew, for about a million years now. Along the way they have built some very complicated and highly skilled societies. During all those years there were very few teachers in the sense of people whose ONLY work was teaching others what they knew. And until very recently there were no people at all who were trained in teaching, AS SUCH. People always understood, sensibly enough, that before you could teach something you had to know it yourself. But only very recently did human beings get the extraordinary notion that in order to be able to teach what you knew you had to spend years being

taught how to teach. (1981, p. 51)

After arguing away certification requirements, the question then becomes, 'What is a good teacher?' Holt gives this definition.

> For a long, long time, people who were good at sharing what they knew have realized certain things:
> 1) to help people learn something, you must first understand what they already know;
> 2) showing people how to do something is better than telling them, and letting them do it themselves is best of all;
> 3) you mustn't tell or show too much at once, since people digest new ideas slowly and must feel secure with new skills or knowledge before they are ready for more;
> 4) you must give people as much time as they want and need to absorb what you have shown or told them;
> 5) instead of testing their understanding with questions you must let them show how much or little they understand by the questions they ask you;
> 6) you must not get impatient or angry when people don't understand;
> 7) scaring people only blocks learning.
>
> These are clearly not things that one has to spend three years talking about.
>
> In fact these are not what schools of education talk about. They give very little thought to the act of teaching itself. What they spend most of their time doing is preparing their students to work in the strange world of schools. Above all else, education students are taught to think that what they know is extremely important and that they are the only ones who know it. (1981, p. 52)

How do professional educators respond to these arguments? The Holmes Group, a consortium of education deans and chief academic officers from major research universities in each of the fifty states, was formed to research possible educational reforms. Their report begins

with this statement.

> America's dissatisfaction with its schools has become chronic and epidemic. Teaching must be improved, but plans for improving teaching also must be improved. We came together because we knew that our own schools and universities were not doing well in teacher education, and because we hoped to improve. (1986, p. 3)

This statement reveals that these professional educators both recognize the problems and admit changes need to be made. After two years of studying alternatives, their results point to more required training for future teachers. This is only one of several such reports in recent years. Thus, while professional educators agree that something needs to be done, and that 'more training' is needed, that is where the agreement ends. They do NOT concur on the specifics of 'what' or 'how.' Interestingly, no professional educator suggests less training as an alternative! Could one reason behind this increased training requirement be a self-serving need to create a market for their services?

Thus the dilemma. Professional educators want more training required, home educators want no professional training requirements.

From my own personal experience in both fields (public educator for six years and home educator for five years), I contribute the following ideas. Professional educators are not being realistic or logical considering the current educational monopoly and its less than satisfactory results. Likewise, home educators are not being realistic or logical

considering the importance of their task and its far-ranging potential results. Both groups of educators must come to agreement on requirements for the unique task of home educating. Ballmann gives his qualifications.

> To be qualified as a Christian home educator, parents must meet two requirements. First, they must be willing to develop, nurture, and exhibit a godly example. This means education begins with the parents and not with the children.
>
> Second, they must sit down and seriously count the costs involved before they make a decision to home school. A deep interest and commitment to the home schooling process must be evident. They must be willing to make the time demands that home education will require.
>
> If you meet these two basic requirements, you are indeed "qualified" to teach your own children. The requirements are not unduly complex and do not require years of special training. (1987, pp. 63-64)

Moore agrees and expands:

> The requirements are not complex. Parents need only be loving, responsive, and reasonably consistent, and salt these qualities with a little imagination, common sense, and willingness to follow a few simple suggestions in this book (Home-Spun Schools). (1982, p. 12)
>
> There are some ideas which apply generally to all home school beginners. We might call them "The Ten Little Commandments for Home Schools."
>
> 1. Be sure of your beliefs and goals as parents; decide if the needs of your children are more important to you than social pressures and bad laws, and if you can be a compassionate neighbor when others think you strange.
> 2. Examine your willingness to be a patient, warm, responsive and consistent parent. If you can't handle your children, learn how. Otherwise, put them in a good school or farm them out to someone who CAN guide them.
> 3. Learn how your children develop. We have prepared such books as Home-Grown Kids, Better Late Than Early and School Can Wait to help you.
> 4. Learn your rights as parents.
> 5. Seek the best counsel available. Reach out to

national specialists.

6. Settle on a curriculum compatible with your ability and beliefs (Appendix A).
7. Keep a balance in your program. Don't tie yourself down to books all day.
8. Don't make a big thing about being different, but don't be ashamed either.
9. If officials challenge you or threaten arrest, be calm, offer evidence of the rightness of your doings, ask if in face of your evidence they have any better ideas. If they are persistent, seek specialists' help.
10. Keep your cool. Be patient. Parental pressures on an unready child can lead to calamity. (1982, pp. 18-20)

Basically, these qualifications fall into several categories: 1)attitude, 2) commitment, and 3) preparation. I agree with these three qualifications and will expand on them.

1) A positive attitude is vital! Such an attitude is basic for BOTH parents and children - especially older children. This attitude is reflected in three areas:

a) a desire to learn

b) a willingness to communicate

c) valuing others

Without these factors properly in place, any educational undertaking will be severely limited. Sadly, such an attitude is very difficult - if not impossible - to accurately measure. It can also fluctuate and change.

2) A commitment to the job. This starts with parents (at least one) being available (home) to teach. No other job should have or take priority. Parental example of commitment will have the greatest impact on the children.

While teaching itself is flexible, the responsibility and commitment must take priority over personal whim. Again, such a requirement is difficult to accurately measure, but is more easily measured than attitude. Commitment is also subject to change depending on many factors.

3) Preparation for any job is essential - this particularly applies to home educating. While not a difficult task, it will take time, effort and practice. The parent must minimally be prepared in a) subject content, b) basic teaching methods, and 3) knowing developmental stages a child will go through. Of all the requirements, this last one is the most easily acquired and measured.

But even this is not all that is necessary. Mary Pride gives the end result of a qualified home educator. She coins a new term, 'schoolproofing,' and then defines it.

> Schoolproofing means making sure your children get a great education no matter what political or educational theory happens to be in vogue. It means having children who learn to read in an age of illiteracy; who learn to obey legitimate authority in an age of sullen rebellion; who learn to stand against injustice in an age of craven conformity.
>
> Schoolproofing means learning how to educate, so you can recognize good and bad education. It means knowing your options: different ways of presenting a lesson, different educational philosophies, different types of teaching setups.
>
> Schoolproofing means YOU are in control. You will have the tools to shop around intelligently in the educational marketplace, or even to opt out and do it yourself. You will recognize the warning signs if a change is needed, and have the power to make the change. You will have more respect for good teachers, and less awe of the bad.

> No longer will your children have to stand in line at the educational cafeteria and take whatever is dished out. You will have learned to cook up your own educational feasts; and if you choose, instead of doing your own cooking, to send the children to a better restaurant, you will know what to look for. (1988, pp. 10-11 Schoolproof)

This kind of 'equipping' takes a lifetime. It can also be accomplished without attending formal education classes.

The missing element - barely addressed by either professional or home educators - is disqualifiers! What factors would DISQUALIFY a parent from undertaking home education? This element was only mentioned once. Moore gives his disqualifier.

> "We do not recommend home schools for fainthearted mothers and fathers who are more concerned about social pressures than the future of their children. (1982, p.10)

I wholeheartedly agree. I would also add that home education is not for:

1) Parents who are not willing or able to maintain a proper attitude,
2) Parents who are not interested in or able to be faithful to a continued commitment,
3) Parents who are not willing or able to properly equip themselves for the task.

While most of the authors mentioned in this literature review did not address this issue, I contend it must be addressed if home education is to become and remain a stable and viable educational alternative.

V. REVIEW OF PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES FOR HOME EDUCATORS

There is a continually growing body of resources available for home educators. The listing here is certainly not exclusive, but will give a good start to anyone interested in the topic. The resources encompass the following categories:

A. References

B. Books

C. Periodicals

D. Workshops/Seminars/Conferences

E. Support Groups

F. Legal Issues

Under each category, noteworthy items are listed and a brief summary is given.

A. References

Mary Pride has authored two reference sources - each the size of a catalog.

> The New Big Book of Home Learning, 1988
> (The Basic Guide to Everything Educational for You and Your Children. 382 pages)
>
> The Next Book of Home Learning, 1987
> (Everything Enriching for You and Your Children. 294 pages)

Both of these books give a catalog-type listing with brief review of every available resource for home educators. The New Big Book of Home Learning includes sections on:

> Books about School and Home School,
> Legal Helps
> Home School Organizations Worldwide
> Curriculum Guide - listing both 'full service programs' and 'small and alternative programs'
> Specific Curriculum Topics - listed alphabetically from 'grammar' to 'worldview'.

The Next Book of Home Learning is similar in format with little duplication of content. It contains sections on:

> Home Management
> Beyond the Basics
> Classical Items (e.g., logic and thinking skills)
> High tech items
> Home business items
> Fine arts

Equipped with just these two volumes, any home educator has access to vast resources of information and materials currently available.

B. Books

Books written are usually current and either cover home education in general or deal with a particular aspect of home education. The following is a brief listing of those I have personally found useful. They are listed alphabetically by author with a brief word of introduction and/or explanation.

The first two books cover home education in general, briefly touching on all the issues, whys and hows.

Ballmann, Raymond. The How and Why of Home Schooling. Crossway Books. 1987.

Harris, Gregg. The Christian Home School. Wolgemuth & Hyatt. 1988.

Macaulay, Susan Schaeffer. For the Children's Sake. Crossway Books. 1985.
Addresses the relationship of education to Christianity. The insights of Charlotte Mason applied to today.

The Moores have extensively written about home education. Each book deals in depth with a particular aspect.

Moore, Raymond and Dorothy.
School Can Wait. Brigham Young University Press. 1979.
Explains the theory that delayed formal education makes the best academic sense.

Home Grown Kids. Word Books. 1981.
Moore's view of developmental stages, child-rearing, and teaching from birth to age ten.

Home Spun Schools. Word Books. 1982.
Families who have successfully home schooled tell their story.

Home Style Teaching. Word Books. 1984.
How-to book based on their rich educational

experience and knowledge.

Home Made Health. Word Books. 1986.
Family Guide to Nutrition, Exercise, Stress Control and Preventive Medicine

Home Built Discipline. Word Books. 1987.
Discipline philosophy and methods as viewed by Lee Canter, Rudolf Dreikur, Thomas Gordon and Raymond Moore. Explains different age categories and related discipline techniques. Gives ten building blocks for commonsense discipline.

Pride, Mary. Schoolproof. Crossway Books. 1988.
A current release that covers educational topics such as: motivation, teaching techniques, learning styles, and pacing.

C. Publications

The following two national publications have consistently done an excellent job of writing about specific topics and keeping home educators updated on current events.

The Parent Educator and Family Report
National bimonthly publication by the Hewitt Research Foundation.
Covers current research, legislative news, legal matters, and other articles of interest to home educators.

The Teaching Home
National bimonthly publication with state news insert.
Covers one topic in depth each issue.
See Appendix B for a listing of topics in back issues.

The next listing is a local Michigan publication, informing home educators of current legal issues, upcoming conferences, and local upcoming events.

Information Network News
State publication of INCH (Information Network for Christian Homes) based in western Michigan.

D. Workshops/Seminars/Conferences

There are informational workshops, seminars, and conferences that are conducted specifically for home educators.

For Michigan residents there is an annual one-day spring conference sponsored by INCH (Information Network for Christian Homes) and held in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Specific dates and other conference details are given in Information Network News.

"The Home Schooling Workshop" is a two-day workshop offered in specific locations nationwide throughout the year. The lecturer is Gregg Harris. Specific listings of dates and locations can be found in The Teaching Home and Information Network News.

Dr. Raymond Moore also lectures nationwide. A listing of his speaking itinerary is available in The Parent Educator and Family Report.

The very first national convention, 'The Teaching Home National Home School Convention '88,' was held in October, 1988, in Portland, Oregon. Specific information was listed in The Teaching Home.

E. Support Groups

These groups are diverse, both in form and function, and are thus hard to categorize and define. Currently, there is no official national organization. Each state has at least one loosely organized group. The function of the group often depends on the political climate of the state. In states that permit home education, the groups often function in informational, supportive, and resource capacities. In states that do not officially permit home education, support groups often take on a political function as well.

Some groups are well organized and publish subscription newsletters. Others are less formal and function more as a phone-tree/field-trip connection. Still others are non-official and formed of people who know other home schoolers in their immediate area who agree to meet or stay in touch regularly for support and encouragement. Some are made up of families who use the same curriculum.

There is a listing of support groups by state in Pride's The New Big Book of Home Learning. This listing gives the address, phone number of the group leader, and a brief description of the group's function and purpose.

Michigan has several official support groups. Two are: Information Network for Christian Homes (INCH), based in Grand Rapids, and Family Centered Education, based in Jackson. I also know of groups in the Detroit area and Lansing. There are innumerable non-official groups.

Networking among home educators is the core of these non-official groups.

I have personally been loosely involved in several different local groups over the years. I have found them to be very helpful, supportive, encouraging, informative, and useful in our educational endeavors.

F. Legal Matters

Home School Legal Defense Association is the most widely known, reputable group. Michael Farris is the leader. For $100/year per family the association will provide experienced legal counsel and representation by qualified attorneys to every member family who is challenged in the area of home schooling. The attorney's fees will be paid in full by the association.

The Rutherford Institute, founded by constitutional lawyer John Whitehead, provides a state-by-state analysis of compulsory education laws and relevant court rulings. This is updated annually and can be ordered per state or any composite of states. John Whitehead and others at the Rutherford Institute have produced a series of books and publications dealing with civil and religious rights. Their arguments are legally sound and have been the basis of many home school legal victories nationwide.

In listing and describing these resources, I have just scratched the surface of what is available. More resources continue to become available each year.

Without a doubt, as the home education movement grows and matures, a concise body of resources and a few spokesmen will emerge as the most authoritative and respected. Also, as home educators become more experienced and knowledgeable, they will become more discerning and selective in their use of resources. This, in turn, will create a greater demand for high-quality resources. Communication and networking will remain at the core of the home education movement. It equips and strengthens individual families.

I must not fail to make mention of all the resources available, used, and produced by professional educators. While most of these resources will need to be adjusted for home educational use, they are none-the-less available.

Given all these resources, preparation for the task of home educating is only limited by attitude, motivation, and time.

In summary, two factors must be remembered. First, legal factors were not addressed. For a thorough understanding of the home education movement, the legal aspects must be understood, considered, and integrated with the information presented in this paper.

Second, for the sake of brevity, I limited this review to a presentation of literature generally supportive of the home education concept. Each individual author's perspective is based on his/her personal beliefs, personal experience, and educational background. While there is much similarity of thought, there is not complete uniformity or agreement on the particulars of the topics addressed. In time, a stronger, more unified voice may yet be heard.

The philosophical roots of home education are plausible and justifiable. While everyone does not agree, it is possible to understand the logic behind the desire and pursuit of this educational alternative. Values common to home educating families include:

1) a renewed commitment to the family unit
2) a conflict with values upheld in the classroom
3) a sense of injustice at the limited choice of current educational alternatives.

Proper social development, often the initial question posed, is widely desired but not thoroughly understood. In examining positive versus negative socialization and in considering the development and results of each, helpful

insight is gained. Then individuals are able to come to their own conclusions. Many who choose home education are interested in the positive, proper social development possible for their children

Reasons common to most home educating families include:

1 - Academic excellence,

2 - Teaching character and morals,

3 - Strengthening the family unit,

4 - Acting on religious convictions,

5 - Integrating education with life.

In some ways the goals of public educators and home educators are the same, just the methods differ. In many other ways, the basic goals differ dramatically.

Just who should and can qualify to home educate their children? The current issue in Michigan focuses on certification requirements. Proponents of home education vigorously attack such regulations. The qualifiers they suggest involve attitude, commitment, preparation.

The resources designed specifically for home educators are growing in breadth and depth. They include reference sources, books, periodicals, meetings, and supports groups. Many now focus on specific educational topics and practical aids and tips. As Mary Pride aptly states,

Today's home schoolers are in the position of those who took the train out West, after pioneers had marked out the way with their covered wagons and gangs of working men had laid the tracks. The train ride had its difficulties, but compared to the first dangerous wagon caravan over the mountains, it was comfortable and safe.

Because those who blazed the way have worked so hard, we have a flood of books and magazines to read, seminars to attend, and other teaching aids. (1988, p. 45)

DESCRIPTION OF PROCEDURES USED FOR INVESTIGATION

I. RESEARCH SUBJECTS

This descriptive study was based on a survey/ questionnaire administered to 200 families who were home educating in Michigan during fall of 1987. The subjects were randomly selected from the south-western area of Michigan by zip code. The zip codes represented an even sampling from both rural and urban areas. The names were taken from the mailing list of a free, state-wide newsletter sent to home educators upon request. The researcher was not involved in the selection of names. Total anonymity was requested by the researcher. The subjects also received a self-addressed, stamped envelope for returning the survey.

II. INSTRUMENT USED TO GATHER DATA

The instrument used to gather the data was titled: 'Home Education Survey - 1987.' The survey/questionnaire opened with a letter of introduction identifying the researcher and stating the purpose of the survey. Questions were stated in numerous ways to obtain a variety of responses. Some questions were yes/no type; other questions asked for a specific number of hours or type of degree; still other questions listed choices with directions to check any that apply. Usually this last type of question included an option labeled 'other,' enabling the subject to fill in a choice not listed. Where a rating was requested, a Likert Scale was used. See Appendix C for a copy of the survey/questionnaire. The actual form sent out was in xerox-reduced form on a legal-sized sheet of blue paper.

III. DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

The surveys were all mailed on the same day. A due date was given, allowing 14 days for response. The responses were collected before and after the due date. In other words, anyone who mailed a response back was counted, even if past the response date. Interestingly, the largest number of responses, nearly half the total received, were received the first day possible for returns. This was very encouraging to the researcher. Three surveys were returned as undeliverable. Nine were returned with comments stating that the family was no longer home schooling. Seventy were returned properly completed representing a 35% response rate. The data results, analyzed in the next section of this paper, are based on these seventy respondents. Every item written on the returned survey/ questionnaire was included in this paper, either in the data analysis section or in the appropriate appendix.

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

In this section, the survey responses are reported. The format follows the format of the survey. For each section the data is reported, then generalizations and conclusions are made. The sections are as follows.

I. General family description

II. Background of teacher(s)

III. Curriculum and instructional practices

IV. Confidence rating

V. Social interaction

VI. Reasons

VII. Practical considerations

VIII. Any additional comments

I. GENERAL FAMILY DESCRIPTION

The information elicited from this portion of the survey described the families according to:

A. Family size

Listing age and grade of each child

B. Number of parents working outside the home

C. Number of hours parent(s) work/week

D. Years they have done home education

E. Years they plan to continue home education

Each area will be described and analyzed separately. Conclusions will be drawn, and generalizations stated.

A. Family size

This question was included to gain specific information regarding the family, such as: number of children; age range; and school affiliation (e.g. home, other, not yet in school).

From a sampling of 70 families, there were a total of 194 children of the following ages:

48 children were ages 1-4, 25%
not yet in a formal school program.
58 children were ages 5-7, 30%
comparable to grades K-2 or lower elementary.
47 children were ages 8-10, 24%
comparable to grades 3-5 or upper elementary.
22 children were ages 11-13, 11%
comparable to grades 6-8 or Junior High School.
19 children were ages 14-17, 10%
comparable to grades 9-12 or High School.

This means that:

25% are not yet of official school age,

54% are in grades equivalent to K-5,

21% are in grades equivalent to 6-12.

Next we examine family size, comparing the surveyed families with the national averages.

The national average family size in 1986 was 3.21 people. (Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1988, p. 49 No. 67)

The survey's average family size in 1987 was 4.75 people.

It is striking to see that the average family size of the home educators surveyed is larger by 1.54 people.

Furthermore, it must be noted that 99% of the surveyed

families are traditional, two-parent families. This compares to the 1986 national average where 73.7% of American families are two-parent families. (Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1988, p. 48 No. 65)

B. Number of parents working outside the home

This question was asked in an attempt to see how many parents (one or both) are working outside the home while attempting to undertake home education.

Of the 70 families surveyed:

60 families 86%
had one parent working outside the home with the second spouse staying home

9 families 13%
had two parents working outside the home

1 family 1%
was a one-parent family/spouse was deceased

This indicates that the vast majority of surveyed families undertaking home education represent the traditional family where one parent works and the other parent stays home with the family. This is NOT typical of current times. The 1980s is the era of the 'double income' family.

C. Number of hours parent(s) work/week

This question was aimed at eliciting a more complete picture of how many hours the second spouse worked. I felt this might give some indication of the seriousness of their home educational efforts.

In looking at the nine families where both spouses work outside the home, we see that:

5 spouses 56%
work 10 hours or less/week (part-time)
2 spouses 22%
work 11-20 hours/week (part-time)
2 spouses 22%
work 21-40 hours/week (full-time)

Thus, of the surveyed families where both parents work outside the home, 78% represent the second spouse working part-time hours. Of the 2 families where the second spouse works full time hours, we note that:

1 worked those hours in a home business

1 was in their last year of home schooling.

It seems obvious that if a family intends to undertake home education, one parent needs to be home doing the job with the children. The results of this portion of the survey reflect just that. Of the few families where two spouses are working, the second spouse is working only part-time hours. I interpret this as indicating that their commitment to home education is a greater priority than the second spouse's full-time hours.

The survey revealed just 2 families who attempt home education with both parents working full time. In my

opinion, this is very difficult - if not impossible. When a second spouse's full-time employment becomes necessary, the family is wise to choose an educational alternative other than home education. This is indeed the same conclusion arrived at by one of these families.

D. Years they have done home education

This question was asked in an attempt to find any growth patterns that might be emerging.

In considering the following results, a definite growth pattern is clear.

1 family	has educated at home for	7 years
2 families	have educated at home for	6 years
7 families	have educated at home for	5 years
14 families	have educated at home for	4 years
18 families	have educated at home for	3 years
12 families	have educated at home for	2 years
16 families	have educated at home for	1 year

The growth pattern can be broken down as follows:

1981-1982	1 family began	
1982-1983	1 family began	1 family continued
1983-1984	5 families began	2 families continued
1984-1985	7 families began	7 families continued
1985-1986	4 families began	14 families continued
1986-1987	0 families began	12 families continued
1987-	4 families began	12 families continued

Thus, to the extent that the surveyed families are representative of the local area, we can conclude that during the last seven years, there has been a 16 fold overall increase in families joining the home education movement. This is in a state where regulations restrict this alternative to parents holding a teaching certificate!

This is obviously a growing movement of the 1980s. What growth pattern will continue in coming years is purely speculative. However, it seems safe to predict that growth will continue before a leveling off or decline begins. These statistics make a definitive statement. Home education is a rapidly emerging educational alternative that

demands recognition from both professional educators and legislators.

E. Years they plan to continue home education

This question was included in an attempt to perceive any future trends.

22 or 31% did not know (indicated by a ?)
4 or 6% left their answer blank
18 or 26% intend to educate at home through grade 12
2 or 3% intend to educate at home through grade 9
9 or 13% intend to educate at home through grade 8
1 or 1% intend to educate at home through grade 7
4 or 6% intend to educate at home through grade 6
1 or 1% intend to educate at home through grade 5
5 or 7% intend to educate at home through grade 3
1 or 1% intend to educate at home through grade 2
1 or 1% intend to educate at home through grade 1
1 or 1% decide year by year
1 or 1% said this is their last year

These group together as follows:

31% are undecided
29% will educate to high school grades 9-12
30% will educate to junior high grades 1-8
8% misc. (blank, last yr., or decide yearly)

This part of the survey shows a wide variation of opinion regarding plans for the future. Nearly equal percentages of families are choosing a diversity of options. Significantly, the largest segment is undecided about the future.

In summary, we gain the following perspective of the surveyed families. The number of families choosing this educational alternative is gradually increasing. Most of those beginning this alternative, continue it. The family structure is atypical of the current non-traditional trend of the 1980s. Rather, they reflect the traditional family, where one spouse works outside the home - usually the father - while the other spouse stays home to raise the family. The family size is larger than comparable current norms. Nearly equal numbers of families are:

a) undecided how long they will continue

b) intend to home educate through high school

c) intend to home educate through junior high.

Thus, there is no generally accepted future plan that can be assumed. So, while acting independently of each other, home educating families are similar to each other in design, structure, and commitment. Yet they maintain individualization regarding future plans.

II. BACKGROUND OF TEACHER(S)

This segment of the survey was designed to elicit information about the parent/teacher's educational background and training. The questions addressed the following topics:

A. Percentage of teaching done by one or more people

B. Years of high school completed

C. Years of college completed

Degrees obtained

D. Those who have a teaching certificate

E. Years of vocational/apprenticeship training

Following the same format, each question will be described and analyzed separately. Conclusions and generalizations will be stated.

A. Percentage of teaching done by one or more people

This question was included to find out if and/or how the actual teaching responsibilities were shared.

31% or 22 parents do 100% of the teaching alone
3% or 2 parents share 99% - 1%
3% or 2 parents share 98% - 2%
13% or 9 parents share 95% - 5%
19% or 13 parents share 90% - 10%
3% or 2 parents share 85% - 15%
16% or 11 parents share 80% - 20%
4% or 3 parents share 70% - 30%
1% or 1 parent shares 60% - 40%
3% or 2 parents share 50% - 50%
1% or 1 parent shares 40%-40%-20%
3% or 2 parents did not answer

This means that:

a) all the teaching is done by one parent in 31% of the surveyed families

b) the teaching task is shared in some way in 66% of the surveyed families - more than twice as many.

While these results may not seem particularly significant, I believe it does reveals one important fact. The commitment of the majority of these parents is genuine and substantial - to the point of sharing the weight of responsibility in getting the job done. This is commendable.

B. Years of high school completed

This question was designed to find out how many parents choosing home education for their children had completed high school themselves.

In analyzing the responses, I uncovered a factor that skews the picture for this portion of the survey. Of the 22 families reporting that 100% of the teaching was done by one person, 14 of these 22 families completed the following information for only one parent. The 8 others completed the following information for both parents. Therefore, the following picture is not complete because 20% of the respondents answered these questions for only one spouse. This is my error and should be taken into consideration when reading this section of the survey. If all respondents had answered for both parents, I suspect the results would probably be higher.

The year of graduation was not asked or noted. Generally, the years between 1960 - 1970 might be comparative of the time when the surveyed parents might have graduated from high school.

Of the 126 parents reporting,

99% or 125 parents completed high school.

Comparing this to national averages for 1960 and 1970,

In 1960, 24.6% of students completed high school,

In 1970, 31.1% of students completed high school.

(Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1988, p. 125

No. 202)

This information, while not specific enough to be used, leads to the general conclusion that the surveyed parents are at least minimally and adequately educated themselves.

C. Years of college completed

This question was designed to elicit information about any college or post high school education completed by the parents, and what particular degrees were earned. The responses are from only 126 parents, due to the error previously explained.

Of the 126 parents reporting:

81% or 102 parents attended college

52% or 65 parents hold earned college degrees

The earned degrees were in fields including:

accounting
art
chemistry
computer science
electronics
engineering
hotel management
math
medicine
ministerial
music
nuclear technology
nursing
nutrition
political science
psychology
teaching.

Needless to say, I was positively impressed by the level and diversity of this college-level training.

D. Those who have a teaching certificate

This question was included to see just how many parents currently undertaking home education hold a teaching certificate. In Michigan, this is one of the current requirements to comply with the regulations applying to home educators.

Of the 126 parents reporting,

27% or 19 parents are certified.

While over 25% of the surveyed families DO comply with this requirement, this also means that nearly 75% of the reporting families DO NOT meet state requirements in this area.

E. Years of vocation/apprenticeship training

This question was included to elicit information about any vocational/apprenticeship training a parent might have other than that offered by a college.

Of the 126 parents reporting,

20% or 28 parents have receiving training.

I do not feel there is any great significance in this information. It merely reveals that those parents who do not hold a college degree have other skills and training.

In summarizing this section dealing with the educational background of the parent/teachers, there are some significant facts worth pointing out. First, this randomly sampled group reflects a high number of well-educated parents. While only a little over one-fourth of these parents hold a teaching certificate, they are highly educated in other areas. Secondly, in over half of these families the parents share the responsibility of teaching - a practical idea!

Two questions come to mind:

1. Why are these well-educated parents opting to choose this particular educational alternative - so opposite of their own experience?

2. Will their strong educational background help them in their current teaching responsibilities?

III.CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

This segment of the survey was designed to examine the following: a) reasons behind curriculum choice, b) usage of instructional materials, c) description of schedule, setting, methods, and materials, and d) helpful resources. The questions were as follows:

A. What are the important features you look for when choosing a curriculum?

B. Using a Likert scale, rate your usage of instructional materials available to you?

C. Describe the schedule, setting, methods, and materials you use.

D. What resources have you found helpful?

At the end of each section an appendix is specified that lists any other answers given by the respondents. Each question will be described and analyzed separately. Conclusions will be drawn and generalizations stated.

A. What are the important features you look for when choosing a curriculum?

There were five possible choices. The instructions were to check any that applied. The choices given were as follows:

1. Academic Strengths
2. Moral & Spiritual Strengths
3. Appeals to student's interests
4. Ease of use for teacher
5. Other:

The responses were as follows:

91% or 64 chose academic strengths
93% or 65 chose moral & spiritual strengths
66% or 46 chose appeals to student's interests
61% or 43 chose ease of use for teacher
20% or 14 chose other - and wrote in comments.

The written comments included the following ideas:

1. Price
2. Pace
3. Service and Help available
4. Historical and scientific accuracy
5. Printing Style

For a complete listing of individual comments, see Appendix D.

Of the 70 respondents making 232 choices:

6% or 4 respondents checked all five items
44% or 31 respondents checked four items
28% or 20 respondents checked three items
18% or 13 respondents checked two items
3% or 2 respondents checked one item

From these results we can conclude that there are two primary factors determining curriculum choice. These two factors are:

1) moral and spiritual strengths

2) academic strengths.

These two reasons are given top priority by over 90% of the surveyed home educators.

B. Using a Likert scale, rate your usage of instructional materials available to you.

This question sought to determine how frequently the parent/teacher made use of any instructional materials they had. Respondents were instructed to circle a number on the Likert scale to rate their usage. The scale ranged from 1 to 9; 1 indicating frequent usage, 5 indicating occasional usage, and 9 indicating rare usage.

The responses were as follows:

51% or 37 used instructions frequently (#1,#2,#3)
25% or 18 used instructions occasionally (#4,#5,#6)
10% or 7 used instructions rarely (#7,#8,#9)
14% or 10 were left blank or marked N/A (not applicable)
2 circled two numbers

One of the two respondents who circled two ratings listed subjects under each rating.

From these results we can conclude that over 75% of the families are using instructions with some degree of frequency. These families used the instructions more frequently in subjects they felt less competent teaching. Likewise, they used the instructions less frequently in subjects where they felt more competent. I interpret this to reflect both a positive attitude, and a lack of pride. These families are serious about their educational responsibility. The majority use instructional materials more frequently than not.

C. Describe the schedule, setting, methods, and materials you use.

This question was designed to elicit descriptive information regarding the specific teaching schedule, the setting, teaching methods, and the type of materials used. The directions indicated they were to check any choices that applied under each topic.

C. 1. Schedule

There were four choices given:

a. Rigid (set times & topics)
b. Regular (flexible times & regular topics)
c. Informal (flexible times & topics)
d. No attempted schedule.

The responses were as follows:

11% or 8 had a rigid schedule
68% or 52 had a regular schedule
20% or 15 had an informal schedule
1% or 1 had no schedule.
6 indicated two choices.

Those indicating two choices specified that the topic determined the type of schedule.

These results indicate that the majority of respondents adhere to a regular schedule - routine but not rigid. This makes sense in a home setting. It also works to the advantage of both parents and students.

The next section under schedule asked respondents to further describe their schedule using time factors of months/year, days/week, and hours/day.

Months / Year

The responses were as follows:

10% or 7 held school for 12 months
3% or 2 held school for 11 months
17% or 12 held school for 10 months
3% or 2 held school for 9 1/2 months
53% or 37 held school for 9 months
1% or 1 held school for 9-12 months
3% or 2 held school for 9-10 months
1% or 1 held school for 8-9 months
9% or 6 were left blank, marked N/A or ?

These responses indicate that all the responding families held school for a typical 9 months/year. Some even stretched it out to 12 months.

Days / Week

The responses were as follows

2 or 3% held school for 7 days a week
53 or 76% held school for 5 days a week
2 or 3% held school for 4-5 days a week
8 or 11% held school for 4 days a week
1 or 1% held school for 3-4 days a week
4 or 6% were left blank or marked N/A

These responses indicate that 93% of responding families hold school 4 to 5 days each week. This also represents a typical number of school days/week.

The two respondents indicating school was held 7 days/week may have misinterpreted the question. While educational moments do actually occur 7 days a week, this question was intended to reveal information regarding formal instructional hours. There is no way to determine what these two respondents meant.

Hours / Day:

The responses were as follows:

1%	or	1	hold school	8	hours per day
4%	or	3	hold school	6	hours per day
9%	or	6	hold school	5 1/2	hours per day
1%	or	1	hold school	5 1/4	hours per day
13%	or	9	hold school	5	hours per day
3%	or	2	hold school	4 1/2	hours per day
17%	or	12	hold school	4	hours per day
9%	or	6	hold school	3 1/2	hours per day
1%	or	1	hold school	3 1/4	hours per day
11%	or	8	hold school	3	hours per day
4%	or	3	hold school	2 1/2	hours per day
11%	or	8	hold school	2	hours per day
1%	or	1	hold school	1 3/4	hours per day
4%	or	3	hold school	1 1/2	hours per day
9%	or	6	were left blank or marked N/A		

In trying to group these hours more compactly, I have grouped them in the following way:

6%	or	4	spend 6 to 8 hours per day
43%	or	30	spend 4 to 5 1/2 hours per day
37%	or	26	spend 2 to 3 1/2 hours per day
6%	or	4	spend less than 2 hours per day
9%	or	6	were unusable

Many respondents commented that the hours varied according to age, academic load, size of family, etc. The vast majority of respondents teach from 2 to 5 1/2 hours/day. This range is also typical of hours in a school day - taking Kindergarten into account.

While children of all ages need 1:1 teaching time, other factors must be considered when deciding number of hours/day that should be spent on teaching/learning. A younger child has a short attention span and is unable to work independently for very long. As a child matures, the attention span increases as does the ability to work more

independently. The quantity of materials studied also increases with age. Thus it follows that for a younger child, briefer, more frequent teaching times are required with the teacher involved 100%. With an older child, the 1:1 time with the teacher can occur for a longer segment and cover more topics. Then the student can study independently for as long as necessary.

C. 2. Setting

This question was designed to classify the setting where teaching occurs. The instructions were to check any that apply. The choices were as follows:

a. Formal - schoolroom-like setting
b. Informal - place determined by the topic
c. No designated place - just anywhere
d. Other - open for their comments

The responses were as follows:

30% or 27 indicated a formal setting used
49% or 43 indicated an informal setting used
6% or 5 indicated no designated place used
15% or 13 made other comments
18 indicated two answers
6 indicated one choice - 'other'.

The 6 who wrote in their own description indicated an informal setting, usually in the same place. This could be the kitchen, dining room table, living room or a desk in a special room. Those indicating two answers either classified a subject with a particular setting, or wrote 'both' and 'depends.'

See Appendix E for a complete listing of comments written in the 'other' choice.

From these responses we can generalize that the informal setting is used by the largest number of respondents. Following next is the formal setting. The choice is frequently determined by the subject being studied. Only a very small number indicated there is no particular place. Again, the choice makes sense in a home setting, where rigidity is not necessary but structure is helpful in serious endeavors.

C. 3. Teaching Methods

This question was designed to elicit a description of the teaching methods used. The instructions were to check any that apply. The choices were as follows:

a. Formal, traditional methods of reciting, reviewing, and questioning - emphasis on knowledge.
b. Less formal methods - emphasis on application to daily life and personal responsibility.
c. No particular methods - emphasis on process not product.
d. Other:

The responses were as follows:

40% or 43 indicated formal, traditional methods
44% or 48 indicated less formal methods
3% or 3 indicated no particular methods
13% or 14 indicated 'other'
2 checked 3 options
29 checked 2 options
39 checked 1 option

Of the 39 that checked only one option,

15 chose a. formal method
19 chose b. less formal method
1 chose c. no particular method
4 chose d. other and wrote in their own answer

Of the 29 that checked two options,

24 chose a & b, combining formal and less formal methods
3 chose b & d, less formal with explanation given
2 chose a & d, formal with explanation given

Of the 2 that checked three options, they both noted that a variety of methods are used depending on the activity, purpose, child, and subject being studied. These same thoughts were echoed in the other explanatory notes.

See Appendix F for a complete listing of all the

comments.

The conclusion can be drawn that in general the teaching methods are adapted to suit the individual, subject matter, and particular need. This reflects good judgment, which is coming from highly educated, but technically uncertified parents.

C. 4. Materials

This question sought to elicit information about how the curriculum and textbooks are being used. The instructions were to check any that apply. The choices were as follows:

a. Formal texts used almost exclusively
b. Formal texts used along with other resources
c. Formal texts used only as a reference resource
d. Few if any formal textbooks used
e. Other

The responses were as follows:

18% or 14 chose a.
13 chose this answer exclusively
1 chose a. and b.
70% or 54 chose b.
49 chose this answer exclusively
2 chose b. and c.
1 chose b. and a.
2 chose b. and e.
5% or 4 chose c.
1 chose this answer exclusively
2 chose c. and b.
1 chose c., d., and e.
1% or 1 chose d.
this was chosen with c. and e.
5% or 4 chose e.
1 chose this answer exclusively
2 chose e. and b.
1 chose e., c., and d.
Only 6 respondents indicated multiple answers.

See Appendix G for a complete listing of all the written comments.

By analyzing this data we can conclude that the majority of respondents use formal curriculum and textbooks along with other resources. This reflects structure with flexibility. Texts are used, but not exclusively, rigidly, or to the exclusion of other resources.

D. Helpful Resources

This last question in the section Curriculum and Instructional Practices was designed to disclose resources these home educators found most helpful. Directions were given to check any that apply. The choices listed were as follows:

Advice of experienced home educators
Advice of friends - non-home educators
Local Home School Support Groups
Experienced Teachers
Pastors
Books about Home Education
Magazines, Newsletters about Home Education
Other.

The responses were as follows, listed in order of frequency:

21% or 51 chose Advice of experienced home educators
20% or 48 chose Magazines, Newsletters
19% or 45 chose Books about home education
13% or 31 chose Experienced teachers
12% or 28 chose Local home school support groups
10% or 25 chose Other - wrote in their own ideas
3% or 7 chose Advice of friends - non-home educators
2% or 5 chose Pastors

The 70 respondents marked 240 choices. They break down as follows:

3 families chose all 8 options
0 families chose 7 options
2 families chose 6 options
11 families chose 5 options
14 families chose 4 options
21 families chose 3 options
12 families chose 2 options
5 families chose 1 option
2 families did not answer this question

The 25 written answers for 'other' included the following ideas:

Home education seminars
Previous teaching experience or training
Trial and error
Imagination
Civic resources: libraries, museums
Educational resources
The Bible
Personal study
Children's ideas and responses

See Appendix H for a complete listing of these responses.

From these answers we can conclude that all those responding to this question do seek help from a wide variety of resources. In fact, 73% enlist the help of experienced home educators, magazines, books, and experienced teachers. This data reflects a teachable attitude held by the parents. This is reassuring and encouraging to observe. These people are not attempting to accomplish the home education task isolated from knowledgeable sources.

In summarizing this section of the survey dealing with curriculum and instructional practices, we find a wealth of information that helps to create a clearer picture of those surveyed.

The largest segment have based their choice of a curriculum on moral, spiritual, and academic strengths. This is not surprising. It correlates both with the literature reviewed and with the data results in a following section that looks at reasons given for home educating.

The majority of parents use instructional materials frequently to occasionally. These are used particularly in subjects where there is a perceived weakness.

In examining the schedule, setting, teaching methods, and use of texts we see the following general results.

The schedule for most home educators is regular. This means flexible hours but a systematic pattern for working through each subject. This makes sense in a home setting. While there is no need to watch the clock, there is a need to make measurable progress. This allows for a functional home and school without undue rigidity.

The hours, days, and months of home schooling correlate closely to state standards for public and private schools. It is difficult to conclude that home educators adhere to these hours BECAUSE of state standards or IN SPITE of them.

The setting for most home educators is informal.

A variety of locations in a home are used as is necessary, practical, and functional.

The teaching methods used by most home educators reflect a balance between formal methods and informal methods, depending on topic. Again, this is a realistic application to a home setting.

The materials used by most home educators include both formal texts and other available resources. In light of the easy access to many additional resources, it is evident that these other resources are being used by these families. They are not limiting themselves to a textbook.

The resources home educators find most helpful are a combination of the verbal advice of experienced teachers and home educators, and written advice offered in magazines and books dealing with home education.

Putting all these details together we see a composite picture of a current home educating family. They make decisions based on a firmly held value system. They have a commitment to their educational goals. They take advantage of the variety available in scheduling, optional settings, practical teaching methods, and usage of materials. There is flexibility in the process yet firm commitment to the ultimate goal.

IV. CONFIDENCE RATING

This segment of the survey was designed to evaluate the parent/teacher's level of confidence in successfully performing the following four teaching functions:

A. Choosing an appropriate curriculum

B. Using an appropriate teaching style to match their child's learning style

C. Ability to discern stages of growth and adjust their expectations accordingly

D. Ability to discern areas of personal ineffectiveness as a teacher.

A Likert scale was used in making these evaluations. Each teaching function will be evaluated separately. The data will be given and generalizations made. In the summary statement, conclusions will be drawn.

Of the 70 respondents, 69 answered segments A and B. 68 answered segments C and D. Appendix I contains four unsolicited comments.

A. Choosing an appropriate curriculum

Likert Scale Number / Meaning	Number of Respondents
1 - No Confidence	= 0
2	= 1
3 - Some	= 1
4	= 1
5 - Moderate	= 8
6	= 4
7 - High	= 16
8	= 13
8.5	= 1
9 - Complete Confidence	= 24

Grouping these into broader categories:

3% or 2 rated low in confidence
(#1, #2, #3)

19% or 13 rated moderately confident
(#4, #5, #6)

78% or 54 rated from high to complete confidence
(#7, #8, #9)

These results reveal that 78%, the largest group, rank themselves at the highest levels of confidence in choosing an appropriate curriculum. The next largest group, 19%, rated themselves moderately confident. When combining these two groups, 97% of the respondents are accounted for. This left only two respondents who rated themselves in the lower categories. No one chose the lowest rating.

B. Using an appropriate teaching style to match my child's learning style.

Likert Scale Number / Meaning	Number of Respondents
1 - No Confidence	= 0
2 -	= 0
3 - Some	= 3
4 -	= 1
5 - Moderate	= 7
6 -	= 12
7 - High	= 17
8 -	= 10
8.5	= 1
9 - Complete Confidence	= 18

Grouping these into broader categories,

4% or 3 rate low in confidence (#1, #2, #3)

29% or 20 rate moderately confident (#4, #5, #6)

67% or 46 rate from high to complete confidence (#7, #8, #9)

These results reveal that 67%, again the largest group, rank themselves at the highest level of confidence in using an appropriate teaching style to match their child's learning style. The next largest group, 29%, rated themselves moderately confident. When combining these two groups 96% of the respondents are accounted for. This leaves only 3 respondents who rated themselves in the lowest categories. All three chose level 3, meaning some degree of confidence. No one chose the lowest two levels possible.

C. Ability to discern stages of growth and adjust my expectations accordingly.

Likert Scale Number / Meaning	Number of Respondents
1 - No Confidence	= 0
2 -	= 0
3 - Some	= 1
4 -	= 0
5 - Moderate	= 8
6 -	= 7
7 - High	= 19
8 -	= 22
9 - Complete Confidence	= 11

Grouping these into broader categories:

1% or 1 rate low in confidence (#1, #2, #3)

22% or 15 rate moderately confident (#4, #5, #6)

77% or 52 rate from high to complete confidence (#7, #8, #9)

These results reveal 77%, again the largest group, ranked themselves at the highest levels of confidence regarding their ability to discern stages of growth and adjust their expectations accordingly. The next largest group, 22%, rated moderate confidence. When combining these two groups, 99% of respondents are represented. This left only one respondent who chose a lower ranking. No one indicated either of the lowest two categories.

D. Ability to discern areas of personal ineffectiveness as a teacher.

Likert Scale Number / Meaning	Number of Respondents
1 - No Confidence	= 0
2 -	= 0
3 - Some	= 2
4 -	= 1
5 - Moderate	= 8
6 -	= 9
7 - High	= 18
8 -	= 19
8.5 -	= 1
9 - Complete Confidence	= 10

Grouping these into broader categories:

3% or 2 rate low in confidence (#1, #2, #3)

26% or 18 rate moderately confident (#4, #5, #6)

71% or 48 rate from high to complete confidence (#7, #8, #9)

The results reveal 71%, the largest group, ranked themselves at the highest levels of confidence in their ability to discern areas of personal ineffectiveness as a teacher. The next largest group, 26%, rated themselves moderately confident. When combining these two groups, 97% of respondents are accounted for. This leaves only 2 respondents who rated themselves in the lower category. No one chose either of the lowest two ratings.

This intriguingly consistent pattern will be analyzed next.

In laying these questions and results side by side according to results we see the following:

Likert Scale Number / Meaning	Number of Respondents/Category A	B	C	D
1 - No Confidence	0	0	0	0
2 -	1	0	0	0
3 - Some Confidence	1	3	1	2
4 -	1	1	0	1
5 - Moderate Confidence	8	7	8	8
6 -	4	12	7	9
7 - High Confidence	16	17	19	18
8 -	13	10	22	19
8.5	1	1	0	1
9 - Complete Confidence	24	18	11	10

When charting the data results in this manner, it is easier to see how the rankings compared to the questions.

Question A. There is complete confidence by the greatest number (24), followed by 30 holding high confidence in choosing curriculum. This question had the widest range of answers with the largest number ranking themselves at the very top of the scale.

Question B. Equal numbers of respondents rate themselves either completely confident (# 8 or #9) and highly confident (# 6 or #7) when adapting a teaching style to a learning style. This question had the greatest number (3) who ranked themsleves in the lowest category.

Question C. The largest number of respondents ranked themselves either # 7 or # 8, highly confident, in their ability to discern growth stages and make appropriate adjustments to their personal expectations. This question also had the narrowest range of answers.

Question D. The greatest number of respondents ranked themselves nearly equally between #7 and #8 - highly confident. The rankings in this question are very similar to those in question C. Both these questions deal with discernment.

The generally high rating pattern is consistent across the questions. This leads to several questions.

> Why do the largest number of respondents consistently rank themselves at the higher levels?
> Why do very few rank themselves at the lowest levels?
> Does this ranking reflect a true or false confidence?

I see at least two major possibilities. Either the respondents are truly confident or they possess an unrealistic confidence, which is actually false confidence. In trying to discern which alternative is closer to the truth, the following must be considered.

One must remember that Michigan is one state where there are potential major negative legal consequences for choosing home education. It naturally follows that families who choose this alternative would hold strong convictions and high levels of confidence in their ability to successfully carry through on their resolve. While convictions and confidence do not equate or reflect training, it is possible that they could be the catalyst and motivation for training if for no other reason than to prove their point.

Another factor that must not be overlooked is the strong educational background of the parents surveyed. It would follow that they would feel highly confident in their ability to perform (or learn how to perform) these teaching tasks.

Then there is the possibility that all the respondents

are truly self-deluded, and these rankings reflect just wishful thinking.

No definitive conclusions can be drawn from this data. Only the final product (actual student outcome) will yield results that can be analyzed. The question of how parent/teacher levels of self-confidence (and preparation) relate to actual student self-confidence is the same question under research in other school settings. Certainly such parallel research needs to occur in the home school movement before any comparative or definitive conclusions can be drawn.

V. SOCIAL INTERACTION

This segment of the survey focused on the social interaction between home educated children and parents with others. The purpose was to discover the degree of isolation or integration of the families, not to analyze their types or degrees of socialization.

Question A focused on the child's interaction with other children. Question B focused on the parents' interaction with other parents. In analyzing the data I have discovered that the wording of question B gave only a partial picture of parental socialization. The question asked how much involvement parents had 'with other home educators.' I had originally intended to elicit a more complete picture of parental socialization habits. As before, after the data is presented generalization will be made and conclusions drawn.

A. Do/does your child(ren) participate in any group activities with others their age?

The respondents were instructed to circle 'Yes' or 'No.' If they indicated 'Yes,' they were then asked to list the type of group and frequency of meeting. For a complete listing of their responses see Appendix J.

93% or 65 answered YES

7% or 5 answered NO

Of those who answered 'YES,' the participation occurred daily, weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, bi-monthly, and seasonally. The activities included:

Clubs (Awana, 4-H, Pioneers, Scouts)
Church Youth Groups
Choir
Community Activities (Theatre, TV soloist)
Field Trips
Music (Flute, Piano, Violin)
Special Classes (Art, Drama, French, Gifted/Talented, Language, Nature, Science)
Sports (Gymnastics, Skating, Soccer, Softball, Swimming)
Sunday School
Visiting older folks

Of the five who reponded NO, four indicated parental social participation (on the next question). One family reported no social interaction by either parents or children. The family has 3 children, the oldest being in Kindergarten. This is their first year of home education.

The conclusion can be drawn that the vast majority of families do not keep their children socially isolated. They interact with other children regularly and frequently.

B. How much are you involved with other home educators?

The respondents were instructed to check any that apply from a list of these five options:

Talk Regularly (once a month or more) to other home school parents.
Attend conferences yearly or more often
Receive and read magazines and books about home education
Participate in a local support group
Other:

See Appendix K for a complete listing of the comments included under 'other.'

The 70 respondents indicated 174 choices. The breakdown of number of answers/respondents is as follows:

4% or 3 indicated 5 choices
16% or 11 indicated 4 choices
29% or 20 indicated 3 choices
29% or 20 indicated 2 choices
22% or 16 indicated 1 choice

The choices were as follows:

30% or 53 Talk Regularly (once a month or more) to other home educators
21% or 37 Attend conferences yearly or more often
25% or 44 Read magazines and books about home education
17% or 29 Participate in a local support group
7% or 12 wrote in other comments

From this the conclusion can be drawn that the majority of respondents are regularly interacting with other home educators. When one also factors in the time commitment demanded by home education itself, this response becomes more significant. These parents consider social interaction vital enough to take time for it.

In summarizing this section of data, the evidence indicates that 99% of these families are not isolating themselves or their children from social interaction. In fact, the previously stated facts give clear evidence that there is a great deal of social interaction. What the data does not define is how this type of socialization differs from that in an educational setting. It also does not allow any conclusions to be drawn as to the net postive or negative effect of this type of socialization. The definitive answer on the best means to produce the best socialized person is not to be found!

VI. REASONS

This segment of the survey was designed to elicit sepcific reasons why this was chosen as an educational alternative. Both positive options (prefaced with We believe) and negative options (prefaced with We were unhappy with) were offered, as well as an open ended option (Other reasons). The instructions were to check any that apply.

99% of the 70 respondents replied. Only one was left completely blank. The 69 respondents indicated 270 choices.

7% or 5 indicated only one reason

93% or 64 indicated more than one reason

After the data is presented, a summary is given and conclusions are drawn.

Reasons: Positive Options

The first four choices were stated in a positive manner:

We believe home education allows the appropriate teaching of spiritual and moral values along with academic subjects

We believe home education allows integration of academic content with practical life skills

We believe home education is more consistent with our self-sufficient lifestyle

We believe the special needs of our child(ren) are best met at home

93% or 64 chose teaching of spiritual and moral values along with academic subjects
71% or 49 chose academic content integrated with practical skills
25% or 17 chose more consistent with self-sufficient lifestyle
71% or 49 chose special needs of our children best met at home

65% or 175 of all the choices indicated some positive reason. Of the 5 respondents indicating only one choice, 3 chose the first option.

Putting it another way, only 5 respondents did NOT indicate the first option as a reason.

Reasons: Negative options

The next three choices were stated in a negative way:

Our child(ren) had poor experience(s) in a public/private school

We were unhappy with the school's curriculum

We were unhappy with the public/private school because:

33% or 23 chose had a poor experience in public/private school
20% or 14 chose unhappy with school's curriculum
38% or 26 chose unhappy with public/private school because...

A few of the items mentioned were:

- differing values taught
- child's individual needs not met
- negative socialization
- academic pressure
- time wasted
- poor role models
- pace
- costs

See Appendix L for a complete listing of the answers given to this open-ended option.

23% or 63 of all the choices were negative reasons - the minority.

Reasons: Other

This last option was open ended.

46% or 32 chose to write in their reasons. Some of the ideas included:

- family unity strengthened
- children best trained at home in early developmental years
- avoid negative influence and behavior patterns
- cost of private education too high
- personal satisfaction and enjoyment

See Appendix M for a complete listing of answers to this question.

In summarizing this section of survey results, we are delving into the heart behind the home education movement. It is evident that the respondents choose this educational alternative for definite, carefully considered reasons. The number one reason given by the largest number of respondents is that home education allows the appropriate teaching of spiritual and moral values along with academic subjects. These respondents are primarily concened about their children's total education. They recognize that schools can not be expected to provide appropriate spiritual and moral education in addition to an academic education. There is little argument that education in spiritual and moral values is sorely lacking. These parents want the right and responsibility to undertake this training themselves.

The second reason, given by the greatest number of people surveyed, is a tie between the integration of academic content with practical life skills and meeting the special needs of our children at home. These respondents are interested in preparing their children with skills as well as knowledge. They also feel that home is the best place to accomplish this complex task. Many respondents are reacting to poor prior experiences they or their children have had in public/private schools.

Interestingly, the reasons given in this data are the same as given by a variety of authors addressing this particular subject. There is complete agreement on this

point. Whether this validates the authors conclusions or the accuracy of this survey it really doesn't matter. One validates the other. That is the crucial factor.

In conclusion, it is interesting to note that there are many more positive reasons given than negative ones. This leads one to conclude that this educational movement is not a reactionary one, but a more purposeful directed movement.

VII. PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This section of the survey was designed to glean information relating to practical aspects as seen by those acutely involved in the task. The questions were all open ended with no answers suggested. The particular questions posed were:

A. What do you think are the major advantages and disadvantages of home education?

B. What recurring problems have you encountered?

C. What would help you do a better job in the future?

D. What is your alternative plan if the main teacher becomes incapacitated for any length of time?

Summary statements will be given and conclusions drawn at the end of the section.

A. What do you think are the MAJOR ADVANTAGES of home education?

The responses included at least 26 different ideas. There were two advantages mentioned repeatedly. They were:

1. 20 respondents specified the advantage of a tailor-made education for their children, which they felt was a better education.
2. 19 respondents specified the advantage of promoting family unity, bonding, time together.

Other advantages mentioned included:

Teaching of spiritual values
No peer pressure
Not exposed to lower morals and bad attitudes
No unhealthy competition or academic pressure
Physically healthier due to less exposure to illness

For a complete listing of all the responses see Appendix N.

Interestingly, the two most frequently mentioned items agree with advantages mentioned throughout the literature reviewed.

A. What do you think are the MAJOR DISADVANTAGES of home education?

The responses included at least 17 different ideas. There were two disadvantage mentioned repeatedly. They were:

1. 20 respondents specified the disadvantage of time and organizational demands.
2. 11 respondents specified the disadvantage of a very busy schedule.

Other disadvantages mentioned included:

Potential legal problems
Household needs neglected
Less personal time

For a complete listing of all the responses see Appendix O.

It is clear that the time and organizational demands of home educators are parallel to those of professional educators.

B. What recurring problems have you encountered?

The responses included at least 21 different ideas. The one recurring problem mentioned by 10 respondents was:

> Dealing with the child's motivation, concentration, and attempts at manipulation.

Other recurring problems mentioned included:

> Dealing with lack of understanding from non-home educators
> Fatigue, exhaustion, stress
> Housework suffers
> Threat of legal intervention
> Taking (bad) advantage of a flexible schedule

For a complete listing of all the responses see Appendix P.

The most frequently mentioned recurring problem of these home educators is one of the same problems facing professional educators.

C. What would help you do a better job in the future?

The responses included at least 17 different ideas. Only two were mentioned repeatedly. They were:

1. 8 respondents specified freedom from legal intervention and legal support would help them do a better job.

2. 8 respondents specified practical teaching help, workshops, and ideas would help them do a better job.

Other ideas mentioned included:

Experience
Support of professional educators
Interaction with other home educators
Limitation of outside demands on my time
Access to resources

For a complete listing of all the responses see Appendix Q.

These responses reveal that the two areas these home educators feel would benefit them parallel ideas that are voiced by professional educators. While home educators voice their desire to be free from legal harrassment, professional educators voice their concern about the continually increasing administrative demands that interfere with their teaching duties. These home educators recognize the value and need for networking with other home educators - something professional educators have already identified and work on.

D. What is your plan if the main teacher becomes incapacitated for any length of time?

The responses included at least 10 different ideas. The three ideas mentioned most frequently were:

1. 14 respondents would enroll their children in a private or christian school
2. 12 respondents didn't know or have a plan
3. 10 respondents would have dad take over the teaching responsibilities.

Other ideas mentioned included:

Enroll in a public school
Pray
Hire a private tutor
Wait
Cry

For a complete listing of all the responses see Appendix R.

These responses indicated that many had never considered this possibility. One implication is that many of these respondents do not view the educational system as all bad; they merely want the freedom to make other choices and alternatives when possible.

In summarizing this section of the survey a few ideas are immediately apparent. First, with no given options, many respondents came to the same conclusions regarding advantages, disadvantages, problems, etc. Second, many of the ideas elicited from these home educators parallel ideas elicited from professional educators. This indicates that much could be shared and learned by both groups of educators if and when they would interface about their profession. The wide variety of ideas offered in response to these questions also reflects the nature of the teaching profession. While the parameters of education may be similar, the particulars of teaching and learning for each child, family, classroom, etc. will forever be unique and dynamic - due to the unique nature of mankind. The responses in this section of the survey reminds us of this fact.

VIII. ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

This last section of the survey was included to enable the respondents to write comments about anything that might not have been covered in the previous questions. 36% or 25 respondents wrote additional comments. See Appendix S for a complete listing of these comments.

Most of the comments reflected a positive tone. Some elaborated on how they view home education after being involved in the process for a period of time. The following excerpts give an example.

> Every day and year of home school is a gift to our whole family, and I am extremely glad for our experience. Multiple choice answers do not adequately convey how my husband and I work together. Teamwork is crucial!
>
> Our family should be able to discuss our home and our school without fear. I spend the greater part of my day caring and working for my family and I resent people treating me as if I were neglecting them.
>
> Home schooling our children is the greatest experience I've ever had! Yes, there are problems that we must deal with, but that is where we all learn how to work through problems, personality differences, etc.
>
> We live in an area where we have excellent choices in public and private education available. Home schooling is a decision we weighed very carefully. Our oldest child appears to be gifted. She is also adopted. The enhancement of family bonding was a major factor in our decision as well as the special needs our child ha for challenge intellectually. Research shows children learn best when parents are involved in the learning experience perhaps due to the emotional bond they have with their parents. Also, research shows quality of learning is highest in a one-to-one tutoring situation.
>
> Thanks. I'm anxious to see the results. We will find out some interesting tings through this!

In summary, it is evident from the comments offered that the majority of these families have seen what home education both demands and offers. As they rise to the high demands of the job, they are also unexpectedly experiencing the delights and rewards of teaching.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

After considering both the content of literature and the data results of this research survey, I will give my conclusions noting surprising facts. Then I will offer several predictions for future developments. I will give some possible areas for future related studies. Finally, I will relate the impact this study has had on my own personal and professional development.

In comparing the survey results with the literature reviewed there is much evidence of correlation. Both sources reveal that increasing numbers of families are readjusting their priorities and recreating a traditional family unit, role, and structure. The father contributes the ultimate direction and financial foundation for the family, while the mother takes responsibility for daily implementation of educating the children. One reason consistently given is the increasingly different value system held by these families from the values promoted either overtly or implicitly in the currently available educational systems. While this alone is not surprising, what is surprising is the consistently high educational level attained by these parents who are now choosing home education.

These families are implementing their educational goals by using a wide variety of methods, materials, schedules,

and setting available to them in their unique home setting. The particular educational structure is dependent on variables such as the size of the family, the ages of the children, and the training of the parents. Surprisingly, most of these parents express high levels of confidence in performing a variety of teaching tasks. Only long term student results will validate these claims.

Socially, there is a high level of interaction by both parents and children - not isolation as one might expect from conjecture. This supports the literature claims that these parents are very interested in developing positive socialization and avoiding the negative effects of peer pressure. Again, true long term results will be revealed only in time.

The reasons given by the respondents parallel the reasons stated in the literature. Surprisingly, a much higher number of families are choosing this educational alternative in response to their own personal convictions, not as a negative reaction to a poor educational experience.

In focusing on practical aspects of home education, there is much consistency among the respondents when defining the advantages and disadvantages. This also correlates with the literature. What is surprising is the similarity between professional educators and home educators when discussing recurring problems encountered and things

that would help them do a better job.

In predicting future issues, I would name at least two: first, definitive qualifications for home educators; second, initiation of interaction and understanding between both groups of educators.

Debate continues in colleges offering educational training as to the precise best qualifications for professional educators. Likewise, debate needs to be undertaken by home educators and legislators as to the precise best qualifications for home educators. To believe that anyone can undertake the task is naive. Likewise, to expect professional qualifications of parents is also naive. Each arena (home and schoolroom) has its unique demands. It then follows that each arena should have its own requirements. Home educators need to recognize that some training is essential, just as professional educators need to recognize that complete professional training is not essential. My personal suggestions for requirements for home educators would include:

1. Training in content to be taught
2. Training in teaching methodology
3. Training in child development
4. Positive parental attitude
5. Personal commitment

Unfortunately, the last two items are very difficult, if not

impossible, to accurately evaluate or measure. Even further, who would decide what the bottom line requirement would be? Yet I believe they are of far greater importance than the first three more easily measured items.

A second issue for future development would be the interaction between professional and home educators. First, both must objectively recognize that they are aiming at the same goal - effectively educating the next generation. Secondly, they could then find areas common to each field and share problems and solutions. This could be done on local, state, and national levels. It would certainly benefit not only professional and home educators but the students of each as well!

There are many avenues for further related studies. The short and long term results of home education relating to character development, socialization, morality, attitudes, knowledge, skills, and risks inherent in the system are but a few. Parents, professional educators, and legislators are all interested in seeing verification and validation of results from this newer educational alternative. Public and private educational systems have been, and continue to be, under scrutiny and study. Home education is too new a phenomenon to have many long term studies available. Thus, the task lies with researching the home educators. The limitations lie both in those willing

and able to do such research, and those willing to be 'objects' of study.

Undertaking this research has definitely had a great impact on both my personal and professional development. Personally, I have had to readjust my priorities to have time available for study. When study-time demands invaded my duties as a home educator and parent, I was frustrated. This frustration provided continued motivation to conclude my studies as quickly as possible so I could get on with the immediate tasks of parenting and teaching!

Professionally, I know that I have grown immeasurably by the process. Not only has my knowledge base been expanded and updated, but my thinking and analyzing skills have been developed and stretched. Incidentally, writing skills have been sharpened and reading speed increased. As a result, I have greater self-awareness of my own strengths and weaknesses. By interacting with other teachers, I see my own weak areas more keenly. Thus, I have been challenged to become more competent. By reading and analyzing past and current issues, I have more self-awareness in knowing what I stand for and why. Finally, my respect has grown for the many uniquely individual and talented professional colleagues and professors I've met in the pursuit of these studies.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

STATE OF MICHIGAN HOME SCHOOL GUIDELINES

EDUCATION OF THE CHILD IN THE PARENTAL HOME

Parents may provide for the education of their children in the home if certain requirements are met.[1] These requirements are as follows:

All instruction must be given by a Michigan certificated teacher. The certificate must be valid for the subject matter being taught by the teacher. All teaching certificates must be registered with the Intermediate Superintendent's office.[2]

The Compulsory School Attendance law states that the curriculum for children in the home must be comparable to that offered by the local public school in which the home is located. The parent must request a statement of comparability from the local superintendent.[3] This statement is to be kept on file in the office of the local superintendent.

Children in the home must be provided with a minimum of 180 days and 900 hours of instruction. Because of the intensive instruction that can be provided by one teacher and one student, it may not be necessary for the certificated teacher to be in attendance for the full day of instruction. The number of hours may be adjusted so that children receive adequate supervision in which to perform their work. ". . . If instruction in the home is provided for 6 or more students, the home must comply with the school fire safety standards. See 1941 PA 207, MCLA 29.1 et seq; MSA 4.559(1) et seq and 1979 Michigan Administrative Code, Vol 1, R 29.16, p 222. Accurate records must be kept by the parent to substantiate the days and hours of instruction provided to the child.[4]"

Children being taught in the home shall be given: A) courses of instruction in the Constitution of the United States, B) Constitution of the State of Michigan, C) the history and present form of civil government of the United States, the State of Michigan, and the political subdivisions and municipalities of the State of Michigan.[5] The parent must provide a statement to the local superintendent of schools that the above courses will be taught.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Attorney General Opinion #5579, dated September 27,1979 - "Therefore, it is the opinion of the Attorney General that a parent who holds a Michigan teacher's certificate and provides comparable educational instruction to his child or children in his home or employs a legally qualified tutor who provides comparable instruction to his child or children in his home and meets the sanitary conditions of the same standard as in the public schools, is complying with section 731 of the School Code of 1955, in that he is providing an education for his child or children at a private school."

[2]Act 451, 1976, Sec. 1532(1) - Before a teacher's certificate is valid in this state, the holder shall record the same in the office of the intermediate superintendent or in the office of the superintendent of schools of a school district of the first, second, or third class where the person expects to teach.

[3]Act 451, 1976, Sec. 1561(3) - A child who is attending regularly and is being taught in a state approved nonpublic school, which teaches subjects comparable to those taught in the public schools to children of corresponding age and grade, as determined by the courses of study for the public schools of the district within which the nonpublic school is located.

[4]Act 302, 1921, Sec. 1 - It is the intent of this act that the sanitary conditions of such schools, the courses of study therein, and the qualifications of the teachers thereof shall be of the same standard as provided in the general school laws of the state.

[5]Act 451, 1976, Sec. 1166(1) - In all public and nonpublic schools in this state regular courses of instruction shall be given in the constitution of the United States, in the constitution of Michigan, and in the history and present form of government of the United States, Michigan and its political subdivisions. Instruction shall begin not later than the opening of the eighth grade, or its equivalent, except in schools maintaining a junior high school, in which case it may begin in the ninth grade.

(2) A high school in this state which offers 12 grades shall require a 1-semester course of study of 5 periods per week in civics which shall include the form and functions of the federal, state, and local governments and shall stress the rights and responsibilities of citizens. A diploma shall not be issued by a high school to a pupil who has not successfully completed this course. This requirement shall not be applicable as a graduation requirement for a high school pupil who has enlisted or been inducted into military service.

APPENDIX B

Topical listing of major articles appearing in The Teaching Home Magazine from 1983-1987.

Art & Creativity
Bible
Classical Approach to Education
Computers
Curriculum
Discipline
Educational Approaches
Family Portraits
Fathers
Handwriting
History
Inspirational
Legal
Math
Motivation
Multi-Grade Teaching
Music
Organizational Helps
Philosophy
Practical/Misc.
Principle Approach
Resources
Socialization
Summer Ideas
Support Groups/Field Trips
Teaching Preschool & Kindergarten
Teaching Science
Teaching to Read
Teaching High Schoolers
Work Education
Writing

Each of the above topics has from one to ten articles listed after the topic title. Regular features of the magazine are: letters to the editor, research report (column by Brian Ray), Fugate Answers (column by Richard Fugate), Pause and Consider (column by Gregg Harris), book review, resource reviews, and national news.

APPENDIX C

November 14, 1987

Dear Home Educator,

Home education is becoming an increasingly popular educational alternative. Many parents choose this alternative because they feel it best meets the educational and psychological needs of their children. Others feel it allows the flexibility to incorporate moral and spiritual teachings along with an academic program.

As a fellow home educator, I am writing to ask your help in a research project designed to describe current home educational practices in southwestern lower Michigan. I would like you to take 10-15 minutes and complete the enclosed survey. To achieve anonymity, please DO NOT identify yourself by name on any portion of the survey. I.N.C.H has agreed to mail this to you on my behalf.

The information you provide will be analyzed, summarized and shared with you in subsequent issues of the I.N.C.H. newsletter. This information will be of interest to a wide variety of people.

Please <u>return</u> the form at your earliest convenience - at the latest <u>by November 30, 1987</u> to insure that your data will be included in the research summary. A stamped, addressed envelope is enclosed for this purpose.

Thank you very much for your time and help.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Barbara Bliss
2702 Robinson Road SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49506
(616) 949-9237

HOME EDUCATION SURVEY - 1987

I. General Family Description

A. List children by Sex and Age
Check under school each currently attends

	Sex - Age	Home School	Other School	Not in School
(e.g.	Female - 10	X		)
#1.				
#2.				
#3.				
#4.				

(if needed - continue list at the end of survey)

B. Parents working outside of home?
(circle one per parent)
Father: Yes / No Mother: Yes / No

C. Number of hours working outside of home per week?
Father:_____ Mother:_____

D. How long have you been home schooling?
(circle one)
1st year/2nd year/3rd year/4th year/___year

E. How long do you intend to home school?
Through grade:_____

II. Background of teacher(s)
#1 refers to 'main' teacher = person who does majority of teaching
#2 refers to 'other' teacher = person who teaches occasionally.

A. Percentage of teaching done:
(should add up to 100%) #1_____#2_____

B. Years of High School completed? #1_____#2_____

C. Years of College completed? #1_____#2_____

Degree(s) obtained? #1_____#2_____

D. Has a teaching certificate?
(circle one per teacher) #1 Yes/No #2 Yes/No

E. Years of Vocational/Apprenticeship Training?
#1_____#2_____

What field/s? #1_____ #2_____

III. Curriculum & Instruction

A. What are the important features you look for when choosing a curriculum?
(Check any that apply)
___Academic Strengths
___Moral & Spiritual Strengths
___Appeals to student's interests
___Ease of use for teacher
___Other:_____

B. If you are using a curriculum that includes precise teaching instructions, how would you describe your use of these instructions?
(circle one)

Frequently Used				Occasionally Used				Rarely Used
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

C. Which phrase(s) below best describe(s) the schedule, setting, methods, and materials used?
(Check any that apply under each topic)

1. Schedule:
___a. Rigid schedule. (set times & topics)
___b. Regular schedule.
(flexible times with regular topics)
___c. Informal schedule.
(flexible times & topics)
___d. No attempted schedule.
Give approximate number of months/days/hours
Formal instruction given____months/year
Formal instruction given____days/week
Formal instruction given____hours/day

2. Setting:
___a. Formal - schoolroom setting
___b. Informal - place determined by topic
___c. No designated place - just anywhere
___d. Other:_____

3. Teaching Methods:
___a. Formal, traditional methods of reciting, reviewing, and questioning - emphasis on knowledge.
___b. Less formal methods - emphasis on application to daily life and personal responsibility.
___c. No particular methods - emphasis on process not product.
___d. Other:_____

4. Materials:
___a. Formal curriculum/textbooks used almost exclusively.
___b. Formal curriculum/textbooks used along with other resources.
___c. Formal curriculum/textbooks used only as a reference resource.
___d. Few if any formal curriculum/textbooks used.
___e. Other:_____

D. Which of the following resources have you found helpful? (Check any that apply)

___Advice of experienced home educators
___Advice of friends - non home educators
___Local Home School Support Groups
___Experienced Teachers
___Pastors
___Books about Home Education
___Magazines, Newsletters about Home Education
___Other:_____
_____

IV. Confidence Rating

How much confidence do you have in your ability to successfully perform each of the following teaching roles?
(Answer questions A - D using the numerical scale below. If unable to answer mark 'UA')

No Confidence---Some----Moderate----High----Complete Confidence

1----2----3----4----5----6----7----8----9

____A. Choose an appropriate curriculum to teach.
____B. Use an appropriate teaching style that matches my child's learning style.
____C. Discern stages of my child's growth and adjust my expectations accordingly.
____D. Discern areas where I am ineffective as a teacher.

V. Social Interaction

A. Do/does your child(ren) participate in any group activities with others their age? (circle one) (e.g. clubs, sports, church groups)

Yes / No

--If 'Yes' please list the type of group and frequency of meeting. (e.g. sports - weekly)

_____

_____

B. How much are you involved with other home educators? (Check any that apply)

___Talk Regularly (once a month or more) to other home school parents.
___Attend conferences yearly or more often.
___Receive and read magazines and books about home education.
___Participate in a local support group.
___Other:_____

VI. Reasons

Why have you chosen to home educate your children? (Check any that apply)

___We believe home education allows the appropriate teaching of spiritual and moral values along with academic subjects.
___We believe home education allows integration of academic content with practical life skills.
___We believe home education is more consistent with our self-sufficient lifestyle.
___We believe the special needs of our child(ren) are best met at home.
___Our child(ren) had poor experience(s) in a public/private school.
___We were unhappy with the school's curriculum.
___We were unhappy with the public/private school because:_____
___Other reasons:_____
_____

VII. Practical Considerations

A. What do you think are the major advantages and disadvantages of home education?
Advantages:_____
_____
Disadvantages:_____
_____

B. What recurring problems have you encountered?
_____
_____

C. What would help you do a better job in the future?_____
_____

D. What is your plan if the main teacher becomes incapacitated for any length of time?_____
_____
_____

VIII. Any additional comments:

APPENDIX D

III. CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

A. What are the <u>important features you look for when choosing a curriculum</u>? (check any that apply)

Below is a listing of answers given by respondents to the option: 'Other:'

<u>Respondent #</u> - <u>Answer</u>

12 - diversity of learning/teaching styles

14 - printing style same as local christian school

15 - test sheets and teacher answer key available inexpensively

17 - price

34 - financial

35 - adaptable to home life

43 - ideas included for practical application of subject matter

48 - cost of materials compared to others

53 - not geared to academic acceleration

54 - level of accuracy
- i.e. history and science

58 - cost
- can I use it again?

61 - living in life with joy

63 - service and help received
- Christian Light has given us excellent help

67 - doesn't push child faster than necessary

APPENDIX E

III. CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

C. Which phrase best describes the setting?
(check any that apply)

Below is a listing of answers given by respondents to the option: 'Other'

Respondent # - Answer

2 - Dining room and/or kitchen

5 - Usually at dining room table.

9 - Kitchen

14 - Some on couch in living room
Most at kitchen table

36 - Each have a desk in different room of house but not (a) [formal-schoolroom setting]

46 - Living room for Bible memory and spiritual training thru Bible

49 - Have own study area

52 - Informal - but usually same place

54 - We redecorated family room into a school room, however children prefer kitchen table

58 - While we have a formal schoolroom, we do feel free to use other rooms/places, etc.

61 - Museums - city parks, etc.

65 - Living room.

68 - Has special desk, but not formal or rigid about it

APPENDIX F

III.CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

C. Which phrase best describes the teaching methods used? (check any that apply)

Below is a listing of answers given by respondents to the option: 'Other'

Respondent # - Answer

1 - Spontaneous

12 - Variety of methods, depending on particular need of child

17 - A.[formal, traditional methods] very lightly
B.[less formal] a little as occasion arises

18 - A.[formal, traditional methods] for academic
B.[less formal] for supplemental

22 - A.[formal, traditional methods] Reading and math
B.[less formal] Other

23 - Much depends on subject as to teaching method. I try to allow creativity rather than conforming to a certain method.

24 - A.[formal, traditional ethods] Math mainly

30 - Combination of A [formal, traditional methods] & B [less formal]

36 - Older two study almost completely on own

38 - Depends on activity and purpose

44 - Primarily self teaching by correspondence

48 - Main purpose - to give wisdom to our daughters: the application of knowledge.

52 - Follow the curriculum but not in a real formal way

54 - Discussion and field trips
We travel to Washington, D.C. and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania each year to study History and U.S. Government for 14 days.

58 - I had to divide this up because I use a variety of methods, depending on the child's age and also

depending on the subject being taught. When it is important to memorize and drill, we do, but we don't try to 'cram' knowledge just to take a book test if that information isn't something they need immediate recall on. The 20% of 'no particular method' is learning simply by exposure to things that interest them.

61 - Mind-Body-Spirit <u>incorporated</u> in study

63 - Light Units (books)
10 books a year per subject
Help as needed

68 - Combination of A [formal, traditional methods] & B [less formal methods]

APPENDIX G

III. CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

C. Which phrase best describes the materials used? (check any that apply)

Below is a listing of answers given by respondents to the option: 'Other'

Respondent # - Answer

2 - Use only teacher's manuals and unit studies (already formulated by Christian Schools International)

12 - Science, Social Studies - no formal texts

38 - Many field trips - play type learning activities

61 - Personal textbooks

APPENDIX H

III. CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

D. Which of the following resources have you found helpful? (Check any that apply)

Below is a listing of answers given by respondents to the option: 'Other'

Respondent # - Answer

4 - home educating friends
- not necessarily more experience

8 - public library

13 - feedback from daughter
- science museums

16 - trial & error
- being familiar with the library has been a big help

17 - Gregg Harris tapes/seminar

18 - conversing with other home educators

21 - library

23 - Kent county gifted and talented association with their speakers

25 - A Becka Video Home School

26 - my teaching experience (8 years) in christian school

29 - whatever works for us!

34 - conferences

38 - my teacher training

45 - education classes

47 - the Bible

52 - resources provided from home school curriculum

53 - Institute of Basic Youth Conflicts

54 - my imagination!

55 - working at a christian school for 6 years

57 - seminars, workshops about home education

58 - my own trial and error!

61 - personal study of alternative education

63 - pastor from christian school boys attended and my experience working there.
- we also call Christian Light for help

64 - seminars: Moore and Harris

APPENDIX I

IV. CONFIDENCE RATING

The following are miscellaneous comments, written by the respondent to further explain their thinking on this segment of the survey. Two are written by respondents who did not complete this section of the survey.

Respondent # - Answer

13 - D. my daughter's responses are clear

42 - Some of these questions are difficult to answer because of our situation with older children. We are a satellite family of a local Christian School using A.C.E. material. I feel the material is their teacher - I am simply their monitor. When my five year old begins formally being educated THEN I will really be a teacher.

54 - D. - I take all suggestions under advisement.
- I believe my confidence does not rest in my previous educational studies at my college.
- My abilities come from trial and error and in the fact that we place our confidence in the Lord.

63 - We have no confidence in ourselves, but in Jesus we have complete confidence. As long as we are faithful and obey Him, God will guide our schooling efforts and bless them.

APPENDIX J

V. SOCIAL INTERACTION

A. Do/does <u>your child(ren) participate in any group activities with others their age</u>? (circle one)

If 'YES' please list the type of gorup and frequency of meeting. (e.g. sports - weekly)

Below is a listing of answers given by respondents to this question. The items in parenthesis () I added for purposes of analysis.

<u>Respondent #</u> - <u>Frequency</u> - <u>Type of Group</u>

1 -	Weekly	Quiz
	Bi-monthly	Club
2 -	(Weekly)	Suzuki Violin Lessons (Music)
	(Weekly)	Sunday School
3 -	(Weekly)	Sunday School/Church
	(Weekly)	Kid Choir (Music)
5 -	Weekly	Church
	Weekly	Sports
	Bi-weekly	Music
7 -	(Weekly)	Sunday School/Church groups
8 -	Weekly	Sports
	Weekly	Music
9 -	Weekly	Support Group
	Weekly	Club
	Weekly	Sports
	Seasonal	Sports
10 -	Weekly	Church Group
	Seasonal	Sports
11 -	Bi-weekly	Church Group
	Daily	Neighbors
	Monthly	Support Group
12 -	Weekly	Church
13 -	Weekly	Scouts (Club)
	Bi-monthly	4-H (Club)
	Bi-weekly	Church youth group

14 -	Weekly	Awana (Club)
	Weekly	Sunday School
15 -	Weekly	Bible Study
	Weekly	Gymnastics (Sports)
	Weekly	Music
	Weekly	Church
	Weekly	Awana (Club)
16 -	Weekly	English Tutoring Class
	Weekly	Church Youth Group
	Weekly	Sunday School
	Weekly	Swimming (Sports)
17 -	(Monthly)	Home School Field Trips
18 -	Weekly	Awana (Club)
	Bi-weekly	Swimming (Sports)
	Weekly	Drama
	Weekly	Language Arts
	Weekly	Church/Sunday School
19 -	(Daily)	Neighbor Kids
	(Weekly)	Scouts (Club)
	(Weekly)	Sunday School
22 -	Weekly	Church
	Bi-Weekly	Prayer/Play (Support Group?)
23 -	Weekly	Cub Scouts (Club)
	Bi-weekly	4-H (Club)
	Bi-weekly	Support Group - Science & History
	Weekly	Spectrum (Gifted Class)
	Weekly	Piano (Music)
24 -	Weekly	Gymnastics (Sports)
	Weekly	Church
25 -	Weekly	Awana (Club)
	Weekly	Sunday School/Church
	Daily	Neighbors
26 -	(Weekly)	Church groups/activities
28 -	Seasonal	Community Theatre
	Weekly/Monthly	Community Activities
29 -	Weekly	Sunday School
30 -	Bi-Weekly	Church
31 -	Weekly	Sports

	Bi-weekly	Church
	Daily	Neighbors
32 -	Weekly	Gymnastics (Sports)
	Weekly	Church
	Weekly	Choir
	Weekly	Club
33 -	Bi-Monthly	Club
	Weekly	Church groups
	Seasonal	Sports
35 -	Weekly	Church Groups
	Seasonal	Sports
	Monthly	Field Trips/Workshops
36 -	Weekly	Sports
	Bi-weekly	Church
	Bi-weekly	Music
	Weekly	Club
37 -	Weekly	Clubs
	Weekly	Church Groups
	Weekly	Sports
38 -	Weekly	Sunday School/Church
	Weekly	Play group
39 -	Weekly	Clubs
	Bi-Weekly	Sports
	Weekly	Church Groups
40 -	(Weekly)	Church Youth Groups
41 -	Weekly	Church Groups
42 -	Bi-Weekly	Church Youth Groups
43 -	Weekly	Church
44 -	Bi-Weekly	Church
	Bi-Weekly	Friends
45 -	Weekly	French Class
	Weekly	Gymnastics (Sports)
	Weekly	Crafts
	Weekly	Awana (Club)
	Weekly	S.S./Church
	Seasonal	Sports - Soccer, swimming
46 -	Weekly	Sports
	Weekly	Music

	Weekly	Club
	Weekly	Church/Sunday School
47 -	Weekly	Sports
	Weekly	Church
	Weekly	Clubs
	Weekly	Visit Friends
48 -	Bi-Weekly	Clubs
	Bi-Weekly	Church Groups
49 -	(Weekly)	Sports/Recreation
50 -	Weekly	S.S.
	Weekly	Choir
	Weekly	Club
	Bi-Monthly	Support Group
51 -	Weekly	Gymnastics (Sports)
	Weekly	Ballet (Sports)
	Weekly	Awana (Club)
	Weekly	French
	Weekly	Art
	Weekly	Scouts (Club)
	Weekly	Ice Skating (Sports)
	Weekly	Church
	Monthly	Youth Group
52 -	(Weekly)	Awana (Club)
	(Weekly)	S.S./Church
	(Daily)	Neighbors
	(Daily)	Friends
53 -	Bi-weekly	Church
	Bi-Weekly	Support Group
	Monthly	4-H (Club)
	Monthly	Nature Class
54 -	Seasonal	Musicals
	(Seasonal)	Softball (Sports)
	(Seasonal)	Golf (Sports)
	Weekly	Church
	Weekly	Club
	Weekly	Choir
	Weekly	Music Lessons
	Weekly	Art
	Monthly	Mission/Elderly visits
	Monthly	TV Vocalist
55 -	Weekly	S.S./Church
	Weekly	Club
	Monthly	Field Trips

56 -	Weekly	S.S./Church
	Weekly	Club
57 -	Weekly	Gymnastics (Sports)
	Bi-weekly	Church Groups
58 -	Weekly	Choir
	Weekly	Church Youth Groups
59 -	Weekly	Church
60 -	Weekly	4-H (Club)
	Weekly	Support Group
61 -	(Weekly)	Church Groups
	(Weekly)	Art Class
	(Weekly)	Dance
	(Weekly)	Language
62 -	Weekly	Awana (Club)
63 -	Weekly	Karate (Sports)
	Weekly	Awana (Club)
64 -	Weekly	Church
	Weekly	Gymnastics
	Bi-Weekly	Music
	Weekly	Friends
65 -	Monthly	4-H (Club)
	Weekly	Puppets
	Weekly	Club
67 -	Weekly	Music
	Weekly	Gymnastics
68 -	Weekly	Violin (Music)
	Weekly	Scouts (Club)
	Weekly	Church Groups
	Weekly	Swimming (Sports)
	Daily	Classes with other H.S. families
69 -	Bi-weekly	Sports
	Weekly	Church youth group
	Bi-monthly	Field Trips
70 -	Weekly	Club
	Weekly	Sports
	Weekly	Music
	Weekly	Church

APPENDIX K

V. SOCIAL INTERACTION

B. How much are you <u>involved with other home educators</u>? (check any that apply)

Below is a listing of answers given by respondents to the option: 'Other'

<u>Respondent #</u> - <u>Answer</u>

1 - arrange activities with others according to our interests and needs
- home school camp
- encourage and educate legislators

5 - informally with friends when need arises

6 - belong to christian school/home school program

13 - exchange teaching with another family so children work together

22 - study science or art jointly

27 - none

35 - certified teacher

47 - plan monthly field trips as a group

58 - I meet weekly with a close home schooling friend to share ideas, fellowship and to do things with our kids together.
- I do attend field trips with my local support group, but not meetings

61 - conversations

63 - nothing on a regular basis

65 - conferences when possible

APPENDIX L

VI. REASONS

Why have you chosen to home educate your children?
(check any that apply)

Below is a listing of answers given by respondents to the option: 'We were unhappy with the public/private school because:'

Respondent # - Answer

9 - (public) my child was being molested by other students
- school would not correct situation

10 - social emphasis placed on monetary values

11 - we had different values

12 - inflexibility in meeting individual needs

17 - lock-stepping and bad socialization
- very humanistic in public school

18 - humanism emphasis
- schools are unable to effectively teach academics
- more concern is placed on social issues: 'decision making', 'nuclear war', etc...
- we want to be involved in this important stage of our children's development

19 - lack of protection of child

22 - morals, psychological/humanistic programs

23 - aggressive behaviors of children
- unable to serve our child's learning style

24 - lacked in positives
- negatives emphasized
- i.e. discipline vs. positive reinforcement
- negative peer pressure

25 - teachers not dedicated to kids' best interest

27 - sex education

32 - too much academic pressure

36 - wasting time

39 - no reinforcing the christian principles we were teaching at home

40 - ?

41 - (public) of bad influence on our children

45 - they were unwilling to help one of our children in need until we brought up the idea of home schooling so we could help.

47 - too much time wasted

48 - poorly qualified teachers they had!

51 - bad socialization
- poor role models'
- stifled my childs learning style by the way the classroom is run

52 - too fast a pace
- peer pressure of money

58 - peer pressure
- homework that was required even in the youngest grades
- high tuition costs
- the total environment was unsatisfactory
- these are just a few reasons that come to mind

61 - not holistic in approach

66 - (private) lack of organization and good leadership

70 - (public) curriculum
- (private) negative teacher attitude

APPENDIX M

VI. REASONS

Why have you chosen to home educate your children?
(check any that apply)

Below is a listing of answers given by respondents to the option: 'Other reasons'

Respondent # - Answer

2 - we would like to raise our children - not have them raised by a peer group

5 - gives more time to give to music, travel and family activities

6 - we believe our children are best trained in the beginning years (6-8 years) at home

10 - we also could not afford the high tuitions of private schools and did not like the values of the public schools

11 - the children were a bad influence on each other

12 - we appreciate the way our family unity and sense of friendship is strengthened; our kids are learning to work and play together. It is a joy to see!

13 - no gifted program at public school for our age child

14 - our son was developing negative behavior patterns from the other kids, e.g. sassyness, smart-alack behavior, physical fighting

15 - we believe that the cost of private christian education is too high compared to the quality of education the child receives
- we can do equally well teaching the children at home right now

17 - to obey Lord's leading

23 - our child is an academically 'gifted' child working 2-4 years above his age level. He was becoming frustrated and negative in the public school setting
- the school wanted complete conformity
- private schools in the area didn't have resources

to handle the situation so we chose home schooling as an alternative
- our child can work at the appropriate academic level which offers a challenge yet be with children at the same age level socially based on choice of extra activities

24 - negative peer pressure

25 - I enjoy the time spent with my children

29 - she was ready for academics before normally recognized.
- schooling may be available now that she's 5, but we still can't see her spending so much time away from us and with foolish companions

31 - we believe God wants us to home school our children

35 - we believe homeschooling provides and builds positive self-esteem and independent thinking skills
- we also believe children need to develop basically free of peer pressure until a certain amount of maturity is developed

38 - we believe home education is one way to promote family bonding

40 - when not a rich person school doesn't care about your child as a real person
- teachers do not feel I know what my child's educational needs are

42 - peer pressure was a very negative, evil influence and may be our #1 reason for taking them out of that situation
- we are confident God has lead us to this decision

47 - need to spend more time as a family than a school schedule allows

48 - intensity in which humanism was being taught in kindergarten and first grade
- we couldn't imagine how much stronger it would get in high grade levels!

51 - strengthens our family unit and allows my children to be self motivated in their school work etc. and encourages them to be free thinkers always comparing what they learn to God's standards

55 - they have a learning disability in reading
- public school automatically classified them as dumb
- christian sometimes let things go because didn't have time to give the attention it took

57 - avoidance of negative peer pressure, individualized instruction is more effective, socialization is best developed in an age integrated setting

64 - we believe our own children are our responsibility and want to insure and watch over their moral, academic, and spiritual growth without detrimental experiences

68 - we are responsible before God for their education and while we feel we can delegate that responsibility, we haven't chosen to do so yet
- because of my husband's work schedule (4pm-2:30am) he would only see our children on the weekend if we didn't home school

69 - our child is a borderline learning disability and didn't qualify for special ed.
- with homeschooling he is learning something - not putting in time at a traditional school

70 - frustration with trying to impact a change on such a large system
- by time any change would be made, our children would be 'out of the system'
- thought our energies could be put to better use

APPENDIX N

VII. PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

A. What do you think are the major advantages of home education?

Below is a listing of answers give by respondents.

Respondent # - Answer

1 - train children in parental values (religious, moral, social, academic)

2 - we are able to continue to teach and raise our children 24 hours a day

3 - a close bond between child and parent, achievements enjoyed

4 - teach God's values with academic subjects - no peer pressure

5 - much time spent with the children
- flexibility
- meets needs of children with various levels of ability

6 - time to really know my children

7 - meeting individual needs and knowing it's done right

8 - tailor made education fits my child's needs
- my children do not thrive in groups

9 - I have control of all things involving my children

10 - family unit becomes stronger as one

11 - the children have time to explore their interests
- our family is more united

12 - meets individual needs
- strengthens family
- good for me (as teacher and mother)

13 - education suited to level of student
- develop self-reliance

14 - flexibility
- education without competition

- better education in less time

16 - influencing my child directly
- knowing my child better
- building our family
- being able to develop curriculum that meets the needs of my child and her particular abilities

17 - doing things the way God intended is always best
- strong families

18 - getting to know our children
- being seen by them as information source

19 - child can learn at own pace

20 - ability to give a Godly application to all subjects

21 - child learns when developmentally ready
- more relaxed
- incorporate work and study life experience

22 - freedom to explore
- consistent environment

23 - can choose appropriate levels of academics even though grade level doesn't correspond to age level
- can control to a degree the exposure to those with aggression and lower morals

24 - parental control
- I know my children better than anyone else

25 - family becomes close now
- I know exactly where my children are intellectually

26 - able to instill the values that are important to us

27 - all and every

28 - ability to closely monitor progress
- more time for instilling our personal values

29 - children develop close relationship with parents
- values instilled at early age

30 - able to progress at child's own learning speed
- can teach moral values

31 - decrease social pressure so child can focus on learning
- parents best know child's ability and limits

32 - learn at own level without distractions and discipline problems
- no real academic pressure or homework

33 - having 100% guidance of our children's development

34 - being friends with our children
- knowing "where they are" spiritually and academically

35 - basically answered under "reasons" category
- builds family unity and "spirit"
- makes children feel secure and "important" that parents take time and effort to educate them

36 - flexible schedule
- less distractions
- less peer pressure

38 - family bonding
- education tailor made for the child
- 1 to 1 tutoring

39 - control over what is learned by and taught to your child
- you can shelter your child from and prepare him for the worldly and sinful influences he must face

40 - one to one kids and parents learn better
- you see what children learn

41 - knowing that your children are learning

42 - we could be the ultimate "gatekeepers" protecting our children spiritually, physically, etc.

43 - my children have a better chance to receive the highest moral and academic schooling possible

44 - spiritual and moral teaching
- fitting to needs and interest of student

45 - family relationships
- real awareness of each childs needs, problems, goals, victories
- building for the future in their lives

46 - close knit family

- value control
- hands-on learning
- spiritual insights

47 - individuality
- family closeness
- God-centered education
- parental authority maintained

48 - assurance that the children understand material before being pushed on
- the girls have our perspective on all issues
- we as parents are aware of what the children are studying and can reinforce lessons in any applicable situation (teach wisdom)
- we have been able to generate tremendous enthusiasm about the joy in learning - they have seen our interest which encourages their interests even more

49 - unlimited
- no peer pressure
- can work at own speed

50 - family is closer

51 - close family unit

52 - going fast or slow depending on my son's strengths and weaknesses

53 - it makes better use of time
- keeps the family together
- children are taught better because someone really cares about them

54 - my children are more confident
- less peer pressure
- we are 'together'

55 - I know them
- can't get away with anything (like not reading a book all the way through)

56 - I know what she is being taught
- teaching is individualized to meet her needs
- worldly influences are limited

58 - knowing my children intimately
- controlling their environment at young ages
- having freedom to teach Biblical truths in their learning as well as "life" experiences: baking,

sewing, etc.
- it seems a more balanced approach to living than separating everything (academic/practical)

59 - opportunity for spiritual and moral instruction
- learning individualized for each student

61 - be able to give oneself to the service of learning

62 - not picking up bad attitudes from other children
- more family time
- flexibility to come and go without being tied down with homework at night

63 - not being conformed to the world around him

64 - one on one education
- more peaceful lifestyle for child

66 - to bring up my children as I feel God has called me

67 - learn parents' values rather than peers'
- more ready for other schooling after being taught at home for a while

68 - the feeling of family unity
- control over what our children are exposed to

69 - we can meet our child on his level
- timing is better
- we team teach

70 - best method for teaching and learning is tutoring
- healthier for children as they're not exposed to so much illness

APPENDIX O

VII. PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

A. What do you think are the major disadvantages of home education?

Below is a listing of answers given by respondents.

Respondent # - Answer

1 - getting into a 'school-at-home' syndrome

2 - it makes an already busy life even busier

3 - the amount of time needed to do a good job

4 - we haven't found any

5 - a mother with large family can feel swamped! Young children not in school can be neglected during school hours.

6 - parent overload

7 - maybe going to jail

8 - legal difficulties
- it takes all our time - we have dropped some activities to do this

9 - my time is so occupied with it but I won't change it

10 - additional burden on mom
- she can't just shove kids off to school each day but is responsible for children

11 - I have less time to pursue my interests
- no time by myself

12 - hard, hard work! Need to be very organized and disciplined

13 - time consuming for teacher
- less learning of conformity

14 - sometimes misses playing with a group his own age - not all bad though!

16 - there is some stress involved at times but in general it is very positive

17 - mothers are not mentally prepared to give so much of self unselfishly
- fear of going to court

18 - occasional tension because of family interactions (mom to son)

19 - less personal time

22 - nothing that can't be overcome

24 - time consuming

25 - takes a lot of my free time

27 - legal

28 - not enough time away from children
- time commitment

29 - hard work
- time consuming

30 - requires much sacrifice of parents' time, but the results are worth it.

31 - time consuming

33 - none

34 - mother has less time to get housework done

35 - makes it more difficult for mother to fulfill home responsibilities
- more effort has to be made to make sure children develop socially, by planning social events and functions

36 - lack of time for mother
- lack of access to latest equipment, etc.

38 - cost
- interruption in primary instructor's career

39 - without great organization the inability to keep up with everything that needs to be done - can be very frustrating

41 - having more than 1 child makes it harder to divide up the time

42 - negative attitude of neighbors, friends and

relatives.
- not having enough money to do so many of the great things we would like to expose our children to

43 - there are less of the higher grade facilities such as a chemistry laboratory

44 - some subjects are difficult to pursue in isolation but this is not a major problem

45 - can't keep up with all the household needs

46 - burn-out of parents
- feelings of inadequacies of parents

47 - time scheduling

48 - truly none so far
- possibly if anything my lessened ability to do more outside the home (serving community and church) but my daughters will always come first!

49 - none right now

50 - it takes a lot of time

51 - my house work doesn't seem to get done

52 - procrastination

53 - time pressure on mother

54 - I am busy all the time and get tired more quickly with our infant to care for than I was with the other children.

55 - not enough children to play with

56 - it takes a lot of time

58 - always having new material to cover
- negative legal pressures

59 - it takes much effort by parents
- scheduling

61 - maybe "socialization"

62 - lack of other children to be with

64 - time commitment on teacher

66 - my time is very programmed
- no time for friend-making

67 - makes families too busy for reaching out and getting involved in lives of other people

68 - mom doesn't get a break

69 - less social outlet for preteen and parents

70 - time demanding

APPENDIX P

VII. PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

B. What recurring problems have you encountered?

Below is a listing of answers given by respondents.

Respondent # - Answer

2 - problems arise from time to time, e.g. needing to be flexible, making lesson plans, discipline (not recurring)

3 - breaking away from the curriculum when it's going too fast

4 - people who don't like home educators mostly - teachers, public and christian schools

5 - little time for young siblings
- weak in teaching phonics skills

6 - fear

7 - none, I love it

8 - hassled by non-supportive families, friends and authorities

9 - getting child to concentrate

10 - fatigue and discouragement of mom
- we are in a rural area with few homeschoolers to associate with and gain and give encouragement

11 - I have a recurring behavior problem with the one I sent to private school for his first three years

12 - I experience isolation from other adults
- accumulative exhaustion

13 - getting so caught up in product that you loose sight of process goal

14 - keeping our 1 1/2 year old busy and out of trouble

16 - getting my child motivated

17 - damage done during K, 1, and 2 in school setting

18 - attitude when doing academics - this is getting

better

19 - stress

20 - stress
- need to be constantly disciplined

21 - tiredness or laziness, sometimes seems bored
- wanting to play instead of work

22 - taking advantage of flexible time schedule

24 - nothing big

25 - no time to clean the oven and basement cupboards!

26 - none

27 - school

28 - children try to manipulate because mom's the teacher
- i.e. being lazy, wanting less work

29 - younger child is the biggest 'problem' - another will be here soon

31 - lack of understanding from non-home-educating friends and family

35 - maintaining adequate records
- tapping available resources: books, films, various libraries, available businesses (etc.) available for field trips and tours, etc.

36 - disciplining myself to keep at it
- motivating the kids (kindly)

38 - too early to tell

39 - a child challenging your authority
- concern over state interference

40 - not finding older books to homeschool with

41 - time stress: trouble getting all subjects covered without taking 8 hours

42 - our 'social' peer-oriented daughter's bad attitude towards home schooling
- insufficient funds

43 - none that can't be overcome yet

44 - developing self motivation and self discipline
- facing this problem has also been a good character development exercise

45 - life has so many exciting things to teach and we don't have enough time for everything

46 - time to accomplish all demands of curriculum - hard to know which to eliminate
- time to accomplish home duties

48 - (outside home) people not realizing the demands on my time

49 - occasional sibling rivalry

51 - constant threat of government intervention

52 - he would rather play

53 - discipline

54 - people interfere by asking rude questions directed to my oldest child

56 - the interferences a toddler can create

58 - time!
- the stress of trying to balance it all and give every family member what they need

59 - motivating children to be diligent

61 - distrust in adults

62 - personality conflicts
- strong wills

63 - 0

64 - other peoples' demand on our time

66 - fatigue

67 - lack of motivation in child
- problems with child not accepting the fact that I am his teacher

68 - not letting other things interfere with our time together

69 - cannot turn off the parent when we put on the teacher

70 - parental fatigue
- time limitations

APPENDIX O

VII. PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

C. What would help you do a better job in the future?

Below is a listing of answers given by respondents.

Respondent # - Answer

2 - workshops - should be in September or in June before a new school year

3 - mainly experience

4 - freedom to continue by state law

5 - someone to help mark and grade papers and prepare lunch

6 - experience

7 - I'm open for input - maybe a newsletter

8 - resolve disadvantages above
- i.e. legal problems and more support

9 - nothing

11 - study the techniques of successful teachers

12 - we're trying to find a way to share outside work/teaching to prevent either from becoming drained

13 - Clonlara type workshop

14 - not sure

16 - feeling secure in what I am doing in the eyes of the state

17 - being able to really preview curriculum before ordering
- being kept safe from bad laws

18 - we set up rewards and fun activities he knows he will do when done - this has helped

19 - limit stressful time demands

20 - more experience

21 - talking more with other home school families to see how they deal with these difficulties
- grow myself in understanding how to incorporate some teaching into daily life experiences and to the satisfaction of husband and others who may not have the same vision and understanding as I

22 - more support and consideration from those not homeschooling

23 - increasing level of patience a little more

24 - a housekeeper! Ha, Ha!

25 - a maid!

26 - a bigger house
- money for lab equipment and additional resources

27 - first contacts before starting

28 - access to more and varied resources

29 - a maid
- a nanny

31 - more support from family and friends
- we believe they'd support us more if only they understood homeschooling
- they are supporting us more as they see our children's rapid progress

34 - more information on high school and graduation
- having a good transcript

35 - better time management

36 - help from husband

38 - too early to tell

39 - state law allowing home school

40 - more meetings in my location
- more home educators who have done it longer than I have

41 - relax

42 - time will help all the way around
- and prayer

43 - more practical learning and practical application idea

44 - opportunities for cooperative work on science topics

45 - fresh ideas especially hands on that don't take a lot of prep

46 - more time! to juggle home duties with school
- curriculum guidance as to what is absolute necessity and what is 'extra'

47 - less governmental pressure

48 - I would appreciate creative ideas about teaching, field trips, extra curricular activities, etc.

49 - to be on a regular schedule

51 - access to reference materials at ISD (intermediate school district)
- chance to discuss situations with understanding (H.S.) educator for free

53 - public schools being supportive of the concept of homeschooling

54 - less time worrying about state interference
- extra funds for materials would be desirable

55 - more information on how to help them on their learning problems

56 - better organization of time

58 - having activities to keep us involved with other families like science fairs, plays, etc.
- perhaps things that would stimulate me as a teacher...usually getting together with a h.s. friend helps me.

59 - ?

61 - more information on other home school situations

64 - hire a maid for housework

66 - freedom from the fear of intervention by public school system

67 - get some creative ideas from other home school moms and other teachers on how to make school more exciting

68 - be more scheduled

69 - more time to prepare daily
- better organization

70 - confidence

APPENDIX R

VII. PRACTICAL CONSIDERATION

D. What is your plan if the main teacher becomes incapacitated for any length of time?

Below is a listing of answers given by respondents.

Respondent # - Answer

1 - would depend on reason and length of time
- for births we 'plan ahead'
- if something traumatic - that maybe all the children would be able to work on at the time

2 - haven't thought about that because our children are preschool age

3 - see if dad can handle it
- christian school

4 - continue as necessary

5 - our children would go to a christian school

6 - wait it out

7 - pray

8 - probably enroll in school

9 - hire a private teacher

10 - only God knows at this time

11 - haven't thought of it
- my husband would have to take over
- I hate the idea of having to send them to a school

12 - do the best we can with the public school
- (we're moving out of Michigan soon)

13 - cry

14 - no plan

16 - requesting family and friends to help out

17 - no specific plans

18 - we don't have a plan - but we would probably send

him to a private school

19 - limited teaching by other teacher

20 - ?

21 - haven't thought that through
- probably would need to put them in school though

22 - friend
- or children may be able to do independent study

23 - father would take over

24 - we made it through me having scarlet fever this spring
- I laid on the couch and the kids brought their school work to me. We managed. They really helped with cleaning and laundry too!

25 - uncertain

27 - ?

28 - rely on other home school mother for teaching

29 - take a vacation
- send her to school - nearest christian school we would agree to is 1 1/2 hours bus ride each way

31 - enrollment in a small private school

33 - have the 'other' teacher take over

34 - kids are old enough to follow curriculum by themselves
- their father would have to make time to be more involved

35 - #2 teacher take more active role
- more help from friends and certified teacher possibly
- not sure - would have to see type of 'incapacitation'

36 - If it could not be worked out with help of extended family members we would enroll them in an christian school

38 - to place our child in public school

39 - local school

40 - I would have my kids with people who home school

41 - praying that that doesn't happen
- haven't decided on plan if that should happen

42 - daddy take over
- send them to our small church school

43 - I don't know
- I'm glad you asked
- now I will think about it and formulate a plan

44 - this would not be a serious problem for self teaching since the 'teachers' task is primarily administrative

45 - private school or possible return to the public school

46 - first choice would be local christian school
- but if finances don't provide, then only alternative is public education

47 - home tutor
- christian school?

48 - we have had this experience and dad has taken over for the most part
- we also have friends that home school
- we have taught their son at times and they have taught our daughters - it's worked out great so far

49 - both children know how to learn
- a teacher isn't really essential

50 - public school

51 - my children basically teach themselves
- they could continue like this with little help from their father

52 - then older child would do it in the evenings

53 - not sure

54 - sorry - that is considered worry
- worry wastes energy
- we will cross each bridge when we get to it

55 - main teacher is me so I have friends who home teach

who would help
- find some way to afford christian school again

56 - if absolutely necessary we would enroll her in a private church school
- we are not opposed to private schools
- we just think home schooling is better

58 - don't have one for long length of time but I would get my oldest child to help the younger ones and give everyone plenty of reading time and independent work until I was back on my feet
- I also have a wide variety of educational tapes (VCR) that I would let them watch and take notes on, etc.
- also playing educational games
- it would be less structured, but none-the-less learning would take place

59 - probably put children in institutional school

61 - create alternative
- or find other home school people

62 - haven't given much thought to this but would probably be christian school

63 - none
- he is able to do his work by himself (except for tests if necessary)

64 - if a short period, do lots of reading and quiet projects but still homeschool

65 - put the children in a christian school

66 - my husband would take over some of the studies
- his mother would help also

69 - probably send back to private school and pray a lot

70 - at that time take inventory of child's needs and see where those needs would best be met

APPENDIX S

VIII. ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Below is a listing of unsolicited comments.

Respondent # - Unsolicited Comments

2 - I am enjoying teaching once I learned to be more flexible

4 - interesting survey
- will enjoy seeing the published results

10 - Even though it's been tough, (from no local support group and encouragement group) I still feel this is where God wants me. I don't want them at this age in public school and the christian schools in this area have problems and attitudes that I'd rather not have to fight against too. We hope to educate our children through junior high years and then put them back in a school system. Only the Lord knows
- but He does give grace for each day.

11 - If I had known of the possibility of home school 6 years ago, I never would have sent my oldest to school. A good friend, and fellow home schooling parent, got me started.

12 - I see real potential for becoming exhausted at some point and needing to put our kids back into public school. Even so, every day and year of home school is a gift to our whole family, and I am extremely glad for our experience of it. Multiple choice answers do not adequately convey how my husband and I work together. He does much of household work (dishes, laundry, etc.) that I used to have more time for. Teamwork is crucial!

14 - We sent our son to kindergarten at a christian school. With a June birthday, he was the youngest boy in his class. We could see he wasn't emotionally as mature as the 'older' boys. We weren't certain of his first grade readiness. We decided to home school as a way of holding him back a grade. However, after experiencing the joys of home schooling, we may keep him home longer than the one year we had initially intended. We also intend to home school our other children when they begin 'school'.

17 - At a conference held by Mary Brown on education,

someone from the State Board of Ed was there. When asked why the college Profs who taught teachers in order to be certified, did not have to be certified, She replied without a moment's hesitation, "Because they (the college profs) have a strong lobby"!! We need to do the same.

18 - Thanks - I'm anxious to see the results - we will find out some interesting things through this!

19 -Basically homeschooling is a very good idea, a healthy and promising form of education. It allows many opportunities, not available within the traditional structure of education. But the reality of certain downfalls can produce stressful situations in some areas indirectly related to homeschooling. It demands - and sometimes overdemands - over commitment.

26 - I also teach four other children in my home. We operate like a small christian school but with a family atmosphere. We eat home-cooked hot lunches together and do monthly programs at the nursing home. Four young people have graduated from here - two are doing well in college.

27 - We need to get more men on the front lines, at local level.

28 - Our home schooling has been a very good experience and we feel fortunate to be able to do it. Although there are definitely downfalls the good benefits always outweigh them.

29 - As the main teacher, etc. I need to have that possibility of sending her to school, or things get too hard. I need to do this because we want to, not thinking we have to. Our daughter already has built up some resistance to peer pressure, for which we are thankful. The more time we have her at home, the more we hope to see this. If necessary, sending her to school sometime in the future wouldn't be so hard. (??!!) We're teaching her to be her own person and do what's right - all having to do with getting along with others and developing studying skills.

31 - Additional advantages of home education: can progress at child's rate of comprehension -- no lags to cause boredom and/or no jumping ahead when child not yet grasping concept.

32 - Some parents we have observed don't seem to have adequate control of their children - those children don't learn well in a less disciplined structured system. Children need interaction with others besides parents and siblings - parents also need a break from having children around 24 hours a day.

38 - We live in an area where we have excellent choices in public and private education available. Home schooling is a decision we weighed very carefully. Our oldest child appears to be gifted. She is also adopted. The enhancement of family bonding was a major factor in our decision as well as the special needs our child has for challenge intellectually. Research shows children learn best when parents are involved in the learning experience perhaps due to the emotional bond they have with their parents. Also, research shows quality of learning is highest in a 1 to 1 tutoring situation.

45 - Home schooling our children is the greatest experience I've ever had! Yes, there are problems that we must deal with, but that is where we all learn how to work through problems, personality differences, etc. We are thrilled with what God is doing in all of our lives!

46 - I feel that with practice and experience that some of the daily, routine problems will be handled as we learn to adapt to the 'program' of homeschooling and its demands. I just hope it won't affect the children while we're 'learning' these skills.

49 - We are more free to do things together. One of the best things we did when we started home schooling was to get rid of the television! Our children learn not only from curriculum, but by reading and doing - chores, dressing out chickens, building pole buildings, helping around the house, with gardening, during canning season, and some of these things take preference over 'schoolwork'. Our son has become quite a pianist because he has had time to devote to practice - we consider his practice part of 'school', plus we are not limited to evening lessons. It's (home schooling) is a constant learning experience for both child and parent. We should have started earlier than 4th and 6th grades! That first year was a real adjustment!

51 - I feel that I'm doing a great job of educating my children while strengthening their spiritual and

moral character. I do fear the legal climate in Michigan. I would like to see no rules governing home schooling but I would like to have access to video tapes available thru the ISD as well as foreign language, science and history materials at ISD. I would also like to be able to sit down with a professional educator sympathetic to home schooling and talk about real and unreal expectations of the children's development so that I can relax a little about what the children can realistically produce and what can wait for their development.

52 - I love the relationships that develop by holding my son out for a few years. We love it.

54 - Our family should be able to discuss our home and our school without fear. My children are aware we are under scrutiny of others and must always be on 'guard' so as not to draw attention to ourselves in order to avoid legal hassles from state and local school authorities. I spend the greater part of my day caring and working for my family and I resent people treating me as if I were neglecting them. I want to be with my family, I love them.

55 - It would be nice to be able to learn more on how to help my boys in their reading and spelling problems. What books, etc. I can get or do to help them learn than what I already know. I'm doing what the public school and christian do to help but I keep thinking there's got to be something else.

61 - Thank you for this effort to make questionnaire

69 - We feel that home schooling is our best choice and want to continue. It is difficult sometimes but mainly because our student learns more slowly than most.

AUTHOR'S BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

I was born and raised in Detroit and Grosse Pointe Woods, Michigan. I graduated from Grosse Pointe High School in 1962. I graduated from Detroit Bible College (now William Tyndale College) in 1966 with a B.R.E. (Bachelor of Religious Education) majoring in Christian Education. I then worked as a secretary and studied, finally graduating from Michigan State University in 1969 with a B.A. in Elementary Education. I taught first grade for 6 years (1969-1975) at Bath Community Schools, just north of Lansing.

In 1975 I left my teaching position to get married. Two children were subsequently born, a girl in 1977 and a boy in 1981. I disliked the idea of sending my first born away to preschool, so I taught her preschool at home - before ever hearing of home education. She attended Kindergarten at Kettle Lake School (part of the Caledonia Community School System). She attended first grade at Grand Rapids Baptist Academy. During this year we moved into Grand Rapids (East Grand Rapids School District) and first heard of home education.

In the fall of 1984, upon successfully meeting all the state regulations, we began our first year of home education. My daughter was in second grade, my son was 3 years old. We have continued to this day. Currently my daughter is in sixth grade and my son is in second grade. Our plans are to home educate them through eighth grade and then place them in public high school.

To resolve an unanswered question, 'Will my home educating hours count towards maintaining my teaching certificate?', I began studying for a Masters degree in 1984, through the local consortium of Michigan State University. (This question was finally answered two years later, 'Yes under certain conditions!'.) Meanwhile, I have slowly taken one class each quarter to fulfill the requirements.

Completion of this research project has been delayed due to the death of a family member, subsequent frequent travel required for over a year, and two major remodeling projects that totally disrupted our life! In hindsight, I see these delays as beneficial to my total perspective and understanding of how home education meshes with expected and unexpected events in one's life.

I trust those interested in home education will feel free to include me in your network of resources!

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Mrs. Barbara A. Bliss
2702 Robinson Road SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49506
(616) 949-9237